

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

---

JUNE, 1866.

---

## The Claverings.

---

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### A VISITOR CALLS AT ONGAR PARK.



It will be remembered that Harry Clavering, on returning one evening to his lodgings in Bloomsbury Square, had been much astonished at finding there the card of Count Pateroff, a man of whom he had only heard, up to that moment, as the friend of the late Lord Ongar. At first he had been very angry with Lady Ongar, thinking that she and this count were in some league together, some league of which he would greatly disapprove; but his anger had given place to a new interest when he learned direct from herself that she had not seen the count, and that she was simply anxious that he, as her friend, should have an interview with the man. He had then become very eager in the matter, offering to subject

himself to any amount of inconvenience so that he might effect that which Lady Ongar asked of him. He was not, however, called upon to endure

any special trouble or expense, as he heard nothing more from Count Pateroff till he had been back in London for two or three weeks.

Lady Ongar's statement to him had been quite true. It had been even more than true; for when she had written she had not even heard directly from the count. She had learned by letter from another person that Count Pateroff was in London, and had then communicated the fact to her friend. This other person was a sister of the count's, who was now living in London, one Madame Gordeloup,—Sophie Gordeloup,—a lady whom Harry had found sitting in Lady Ongar's room when last he had seen her in Bolton Street. He had not then heard her name; nor was he aware then, or for some time subsequently, that Count Pateroff had any relative in London.

Lady Ongar had been a fortnight in the country before she received Madame Gordeloup's letter. In that letter the sister had declared herself to be most anxious that her brother should see Lady Ongar. The letter had been in French, and had been very eloquent,—more eloquent in its cause than any letter with the same object could have been if written by an Englishwoman in English; and the eloquence was less offensive than it might, under all concurrent circumstances, have been had it reached Lady Ongar in English. The reader must not, however, suppose that the letter contained a word that was intended to support a lover's suit. It was very far indeed from that, and spoke of the count simply as a friend; but its eloquence went to show that nothing that had passed should be construed by Lady Ongar as offering any bar to a fair friendship. What the world said!—Bah! Did not she know,—she, Sophie,—and did not her friend know,—her friend Julie,—that the world was a great liar? Was it not even now telling wicked venomous lies about her friend Julie? Why mind what the world said, seeing that the world could not be brought to speak one word of truth? The world indeed! Bah!

But Lady Ongar, though she was not as yet more than half as old as Madame Gordeloup, knew what she was about almost as well as that lady knew what Sophie Gordeloup was doing. Lady Ongar had known the count's sister in France and Italy, having seen much of her in one of those sudden intimacies to which English people are subject when abroad; and she had been glad to see Madame Gordeloup in London,—much more glad than she would have been had she been received there on her return by a crowd of loving native friends. But not on that account was she prepared to shape her conduct in accordance with her friend Sophie's advice, and especially not so when that advice had reference to Sophie's brother. She had, therefore, said very little in return to the lady's eloquence, answering the letter on that matter very vaguely; but, having a purpose of her own, had begged that Count Pateroff might be asked to call upon Harry Clavering. Count Pateroff did not feel himself to care very much about Harry Clavering, but wishing to do as he was bidden, did leave his card in Bloomsbury Square.

And why was Lady Ongar anxious that the young man who was her

friend should see the man who had been her husband's friend, and whose name had been mixed with her own in so grievous a manner? She had called Harry her friend, and it might be that she desired to give this friend every possible means of testing the truth of that story which she herself had told. The reader, perhaps, will hardly have believed in Lady Ongar's friendship;—will, perhaps, have believed neither the friendship nor the story. If so, the reader will have done her wrong, and will not have read her character aright. The woman was not heartless because she had once, in one great epoch of her life, betrayed her own heart; nor was she altogether false because she had once lied; nor altogether vile, because she had once taught herself that, for such an one as her, riches were a necessity. It might be that the punishment of her sin could meet with no remission in this world, but not on that account should it be presumed that there was no place for repentance left to her.

As she walked alone through the shrubberies at Ongar Park she thought much of those other paths at Clavering, and of the walks in which she had not been alone; and she thought of that interview in the garden when she had explained to Harry,—as she had then thought so successfully,—that they two, each being poor, were not fit to love and marry each other. She had brooded over all that, too, during the long hours of her sad journey home to England. She was thinking of it still when she had met him, and had been so cold to him on the platform of the railway station, when she had sent him away angry because she had seemed to slight him. She had thought of it as she had sat in her London room, telling him the terrible tale of her married life, while her eyes were fixed on his and her head was resting on her hands. Even then, at that moment, she was asking herself whether he believed her story, or whether, within his breast, he was saying that she was vile and false. She knew that she had been false to him, and that he must have despised her when, with her easy philosophy, she had made the best of her own mercenary perfidy. He had called her a jilt to her face, and she had been able to receive the accusation with a smile. Would he now call her something worse, and with a louder voice, within his own bosom? And if she could convince him that to that accusation she was not fairly subject, might the old thing come back again? Would he walk with her again, and look into her eyes as though he only wanted her commands to show himself ready to be her slave? She was a widow, and had seen many things, but even now she had not reached her six-and-twentieth year.

The apples at her rich country-seat had quickly become ashes between her teeth, but something of the juice of the fruit might yet reach her palate if he would come and sit with her at the table. As she complained to herself of the coldness of the world, she thought that she would not care how cold might be all the world if there might be but one whom she could love, and who would love her. And him she had loved. To him, in old days,—in days which now seemed to her to be very old,—she had made confession of her love. Old as were those days, it could not be but

he should still remember them. She had loved him, and him only. To none other had she ever pretended love. From none other had love been offered to her. Between her and that wretched being to whom she had sold herself, who had been half dead before she had seen him, there had been no pretence of love. But Harry Clavering she had loved. Harry Clavering was a man, with all those qualities which she valued, and also with those foibles which saved him from being too perfect for so slight a creature as herself. Harry had been offended to the quick, and had called her a jilt; but yet it might be possible that he would return to her.

It should not be supposed that since her return to England she had had one settled, definite object before her eyes with regard to this renewal of her love. There had been times in which she had thought that she would go on with the life which she had prepared for herself, and that she would make herself contented, if not happy, with the price which had been paid to her. And there were other times, in which her spirits sank low within her, and she told herself that no contentment was any longer possible to her. She looked at herself in the glass, and found herself to be old and haggard. Harry, she said, was the last man in the world to sell himself for wealth, when there was no love remaining. Harry would never do as she had done with herself! Not for all the wealth that woman ever inherited,—so she told herself,—would he link himself to one who had made herself vile and tainted among women! In this, I think, she did him no more than justice, though it may be that in some other matters she rated his character too highly. Of Florence Burton she had as yet heard nothing, though had she heard of her, it may well be that she would not on that account have desisted. Such being her thoughts and her hopes, she had written to Harry, begging him to see this man who had followed her,—she knew not why,—from Italy; and had told the sister simply that she could not do as she was asked, because she was away from London, alone in a country house.

And quite alone she was sitting one morning, counting up her misery, feeling that the apples were, in truth, ashes, when a servant came to her, telling her that there was a gentleman in the hall desirous of seeing her. The man had the visitor's card in his hand, but before she could read the name, the blood had mounted into her face as she told herself that it was Harry Clavering. There was joy for a moment at her heart; but she must not show it,—not as yet. She had been but four months a widow, and he should not have come to her in the country. She must see him and in some way make him understand this,—but she would be very gentle with him. Then her eye fell upon the card, and she saw, with grievous disappointment, that it bore the name of Count Pateroff. No;—she was not going to be caught in that way. Let the result be what it might, she would not let Sophie Gordeloup, or Sophie's brother, get the better of her by such a ruse as that! "Tell the gentleman, with my compliments," she said, as she handed back the card, "that I regret it greatly, but I can see no one now." Then the servant went away, and she sat wondering whether the count would be able



to make his way into her presence. She felt rather than knew that she had some reason to fear him. All that had been told of him and of her had been false. No accusation brought against her had contained one spark of truth. But there had been things between Lord Ongar and this man which she would not care to have told openly in England. And though, in his conduct to her, he had been customarily courteous, and on one occasion had been generous, still she feared him. She would much rather that he should have remained in Italy. And though, when all alone in Bolton Street, she had in her desolation welcomed his sister Sophie, she would have preferred that Sophie should not have come to her, claiming to renew their friendship. But with the count she would hold no communion now, even though he should find his way into the room.

A few minutes passed before the servant returned, and then he brought a note with him. As the door opened Lady Ongar rose, ready to leave the room by another passage; but she took the note and read it. It was as follows:—"I cannot understand why you should refuse to see me, and I feel aggrieved. My present purpose is to say a few words to you on private matters connected with papers that belonged to Lord Ongar. I still hope that you will admit me.—P." Having read these words while standing, she made an effort to think what might be the best course for her to follow. As for Lord Ongar's papers, she did not believe in the plea. Lord Ongar could have had no papers interesting to her in such a manner as to make her desirous of seeing this man or of hearing of them in private. Lord Ongar, though she had nursed him to the hour of his death, earning her price, had been her bitterest enemy; and though there had been something about this count that she had respected, she had known him to be a man of intrigue and afraid of no falsehoods in his intrigues,—a dangerous man, who might perhaps now and again do a generous thing, but one who would expect payment for his generosity. Besides, had he not been named openly as her lover? She wrote to him, therefore, as follows:—"Lady Ongar presents her compliments to Count Pateroff, and finds it to be out of her power to see him at present." This answer the visitor took and walked away from the front door without showing any disgust to the servant, either by his demeanour or in his countenance. On that evening she received from him a long letter, written at the neighbouring inn, expostulating with her as to her conduct towards him, and saying in the last line, that it was "impossible now that they should be strangers to each other." "Impossible, that we should be strangers," she said almost out loud. "Why impossible? I know no such impossibility." After that she carefully burned both the letter and the note.

She remained at Ongar Park something over six weeks, and then, about the beginning of May, she went back to London. No one had been to see her, except Mr. Sturm, the clergyman of the parish; and he, though something almost approaching to an intimacy had sprung up between them, had never yet spoken to her of his wife. She was not

quite sure whether her rank might not deter him,—whether under such circumstances as those now in question, the ordinary social rules were not ordinarily broken,—whether a countess should not call on a clergyman's wife first, although the countess might be the stranger; but she did not dare to do as she would have done, had no blight attached itself to her name. She gave, therefore, no hint; she said no word of Mrs. Sturm, though her heart was longing for a kind word from some woman's mouth. But she allowed herself to feel no anger against the husband, and went through her parish work, thanking him for his assistance.

Of Mr. Giles she had seen very little, and since her misfortune with Enoch Gubby, she had made no further attempt to interfere with the wages of the persons employed. Into the houses of some of the poor she had made her way, but she fancied that they were not glad to see her. They might, perhaps, have all heard of her reputation, and Gubby's daughter may have congratulated herself that there was another in the parish as bad as herself, or perhaps, happily, worse. The owner of all the wealth around strove to make Mrs. Button become a messenger of charity between herself and some of the poor; but Mrs. Button altogether declined the employment, although, as her mistress had ascertained, she herself performed her own little missions of charity with zeal. Before the fortnight was over, Lady Ongar was sick of her house and her park, utterly disregarding of her horses and oxen, and unmindful even of the pleasant stream which in these spring days rippled softly at the bottom of her gardens.

She had undertaken to be back in London early in May, by appointment with her lawyer, and had unfortunately communicated the fact to Madame Gordeloup. Four or five days before she was due in Bolton Street, her mindful Sophie, with unerring memory, wrote to her, declaring her readiness to do all and anything that the most diligent friendship could prompt. Should she meet her dear Julie at the station in London? Should she bring any special carriage? Should she order any special dinner in Bolton Street? She herself would of course come to Bolton Street, if not allowed to be present at the station. It was still chilly in the evenings, and she would have fires lit. Might she suggest a roast fowl and some bread sauce, and perhaps a sweetbread,—and just one glass of champagne? And might she share the banquet? There was not a word in the note about the too obtrusive brother, either as to the offence committed by him, or the offence felt by him.

The little Franco-Polish woman was there in Bolton Street, of course,—for Lady Ongar had not dared to refuse her. A little, dry, bright woman she was, with quick eyes, and thin lips, and small nose, and mean forehead, and scanty hair drawn back quite tightly from her face and head; very dry, but still almost pretty with her quickness and her brightness. She was fifty, was Sophie Gordeloup, but she had so managed her years that she was as active on her limbs as most women are at twenty-five. And the chicken and the bread-sauce, and the sweetbread, and the cham-

pagne were there, all very good of their kind; for Sophie Gordeloup liked such things to be good, and knew how to indulge her own appetite, and to coax that of another person.

Some little satisfaction Lady Ongar received from the fact that she was not alone; but the satisfaction was not satisfactory. When Sophie had left her at ten o'clock, running off by herself to her lodgings in Mount Street, Lady Ongar, after but one moment's thought, sat down and wrote a note to Harry Clavering.

"DEAR HARRY,—I am back in town. Pray come and see me to-morrow evening.

Yours ever,

"J. O."

---

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### COUNT PATEROFF AND HIS SISTER.

AFTER an interval of some weeks, during which Harry had been down at Clavering and had returned again to his work at the Adelphi, Count Pateroff called again in Bloomsbury Square;—but Harry was at Mr. Beilby's office. Harry at once returned the count's visit at the address given in Mount Street. Madame was at home, said the servant-girl, from which Harry was led to suppose that the count was a married man; but Harry felt that he had no right to intrude upon madame, so he simply left his card. Wishing, however, really to have this interview, and having been lately elected at a club of which he was rather proud, he wrote to the count asking him to dine with him at the Beaufort. He explained that there was a strangers' room,—which Pateroff knew very well, having often dined at the Beaufort,—and said something as to a private little dinner for two, thereby apologizing for proposing to the count to dine without other guests. Pateroff accepted the invitation, and Harry, never having done such a thing before, ordered his dinner with much nervousness.

The count was punctual, and the two men introduced themselves. Harry had expected to see a handsome foreigner, with black hair, polished whiskers, and probably a hook nose,—forty years of age or thereabouts, but so got up as to look not much more than thirty. But his guest was by no means a man of that stamp. Excepting that the count's age was altogether uncertain, no correctness of guess on that matter being possible by means of his appearance, Harry's preconceived notion was wrong in every point. He was a fair man, with a broad fair face, and very light blue eyes; his forehead was low, but broad; he wore no whiskers, but bore on his lip a heavy moustache which was not grey, but perfectly white—white it was with years of course, but yet it gave no sign of age to his face. He was well made, active, and somewhat broad in the shoulders, though rather below the middle height. But for a certain ease of manner which he possessed, accompanied by something of restlessness in his eye, any one would have taken him for an Englishman. And his speech hardly

betrayed that he was not English. Harry, knowing that he was a foreigner, noticed now and again some little acquired distinctness of speech which is hardly natural to a native; but otherwise there was nothing in his tongue to betray him.

"I am sorry that you should have had so much trouble," he said, shaking hands with Harry. Clavering declared that he had incurred no trouble, and declared also that he would be only too happy to have taken any trouble in obeying a behest from his friend Lady Ongar. Had he been a Pole as was the count, he would not have forgotten to add that he would have been equally willing to exert himself with the view of making the count's acquaintance; but being simply a young Englishman, he was much too awkward for any such courtesy as that. The count observed the omission, smiled, and bowed. Then he spoke of the weather, and said that London was a magnificent city. Oh, yes, he knew London well,—had known it these twenty years;—had been for fifteen years a member of the Travellers';—he liked everything English, except hunting. English hunting he had found to be dull work. But he liked shooting for an hour or two. He could not rival, he said, the intense energy of an Englishman, who would work all day with his guns harder than ploughmen with their ploughs. Englishmen sported, he said, as though more than their bread,—as though their honour, their wives, their souls, depended on it. It was very fine! He often wished that he was an Englishman. Then he shrugged his shoulders.

Harry was very anxious to commence a conversation about Lady Ongar, but he did not know how at first to introduce her name. Count Pateroff had come to him at Lady Ongar's request, and therefore, as he thought, the count should have been the first to mention her. But the count seemed to be enjoying his dinner without any thought either of Lady Ongar or of her late husband. At this time he had been down to Ongar Park, on that mission which had been, as we know, futile; but he said no word of that to Harry. He seemed to enjoy his dinner thoroughly, and made himself very agreeable. When the wine was discussed he told Harry that a certain vintage of Moselle was very famous at the Beaufort. Harry ordered the wine of course, and was delighted to give his guest the best of everything; but he was a little annoyed at finding that the stranger knew his club better than he knew it himself. Slowly the count ate his dinner, enjoying every morsel that he took with that thoughtful, conscious pleasure which young men never attain in eating and drinking, and which men as they grow older so often forget to acquire. But the count never forgot any of his own capacities for pleasure, and in all things made the most of his own resources. To be rich is not to have one or ten thousand a year, but to be able to get out of that one or ten thousand all that every pound, and every shilling, and every penny will give you. After this fashion the count was a rich man.

"You don't sit after dinner here, I suppose," said the count, when he had completed an elaborate washing of his mouth and moustache. "I

like this club because we who are strangers have so charming a room for our smoking. It is the best club in London for men who do not belong to it."

It occurred to Harry that in the smoking-room there could be no privacy. Three or four men had already spoken to the count, showing that he was well known, giving notice, as it were, that Pateroff would become a public man when once he was placed in a public circle. To have given a dinner to the count, and to have spoken no word to him about Lady Ongar, would be by no means satisfactory to Harry's feelings, though, as it appeared, it might be sufficiently satisfactory to the guest. Harry therefore suggested one bottle of claret. The count agreed, expressing an opinion that the 51 Lafitte was unexceptional. The 51 Lafitte was ordered, and Harry, as he filled his glass, considered the way in which his subject should be introduced.

"You knew Lord Ongar, I think, abroad?"

"Lord Ongar,—abroad! Oh, yes, very well; and for many years here in London; and at Vienna; and very early in life at St. Petersburg. I knew Lord Ongar first in Russia when he was attached to the embassy as Frederic Courton. His father, Lord Courton, was then alive, as was also his grandfather. He was a nice, good-looking lad then."

"As regards his being nice, he seems to have changed a good deal before he died." This the count noticed by simply shrugging his shoulders and smiling as he sipped his wine. "By all that I can hear he became a horrid brute when he married," said Harry, energetically.

"He was not pleasant when he was ill at Florence," said the count.

"She must have had a terrible time with him," said Harry.

The count put up his hands, again shrugged his shoulders, and then shook his head. "She knew he was no longer an Adonis when he married her."

"An Adonis! No; she did not expect an Adonis; but she thought he would have something of the honour and feelings of a man."

"She found it uncomfortable, no doubt. He did too much of this, you know," said the count, raising his glass to his lips; "and he didn't do it with 51 Lafitte. That was Ongar's fault. All the world knew it for the last ten years. No one knew it better than Hugh Clavering."

"But—" said Harry, and then he stopped. He hardly knew what it was that he wished to learn from the man, though he certainly did wish to learn something. He had thought that the count would himself have talked about Lady Ongar and those Florentine days, but this he did not seem disposed to do. "Shall we have our cigars now?" said Count Pateroff.

"One moment, if you don't mind."

"Certainly, certainly. There is no hurry."

"You will take no more wine?"

"No more wine. I take my wine at dinner, as you saw."

"I want to ask you one special question,—about Lady Ongar."

"I will say anything in her favour that you please. I am always ready to say anything in the favour of any lady, and, if needs be, to swear it. But anything against any lady nobody ever heard me say."

Harry was sharp enough to perceive that any assertion made under such a stipulation was worse than nothing. It was as when a man, in denying the truth of a statement, does so with an assurance that on that subject he should consider himself justified in telling any number of lies. "I did not write the book,—but you have no right to ask the question; and I should say that I had not, even if I had." Pateroff was speaking of Lady Ongar in this way, and Harry hated him for doing so.

"I don't want you to say any good of her," said he, "or any evil."

"I certainly shall say no evil of her."

"But I think you know that she has been most cruelly treated."

"Well, there is about seven—thousand—pounds a year, I think! Seven—thousand—a year! Not francs, but pounds! We poor foreigners lose ourselves in amazement when we hear about your English fortunes. Seven thousand pounds a year for a lady all alone, and a beau-tiful house! A house so beautiful, they tell me!"

"What has that to do with it?" said Harry; whereupon the count again shrugged his shoulders. "What has that to do with it? Because the man was rich he was not justified in ill-treating his wife. Did he not bring false accusations against her, in order that he might rob her after his death of all that of which you think so much? Did he not bear false witness against her, to his own dishonour?"

"She has got the money, I think,—and the beautiful house."

"But her name has been covered with lies."

"What can I do? Why do you ask me? I know nothing. Look here, Mr. Clavering, if you want to make any inquiry you had better go to my sister. I don't see what good it will do, but she will talk to you by the hour together, if you wish it. Let us smoke."

"Your sister?"

"Yes, my sister. Madame Gordeloup is her name. Has not Lady Ongar mentioned my sister? They are inseparables. My sister lives in Mount Street."

"With you?"

"No, not with me; I do not live in Mount Street. I have my address sometimes at her house."

"Madame Gordeloup?"

"Yes, Madame Gordeloup. She is Lady Ongar's friend. She will talk to you."

"Will you introduce me, Count Pateroff?"

"Oh, no; it is not necessary. You can go to Mount Street, and she will be delighted. There is the card. And now we will smoke." Harry felt that he could not, with good-breeding, detain the count any longer, and, therefore, rising from his chair, led the way into the smoking-room. When there, the man of the world separated himself from his young friend, of whose enthusiasm he had perhaps had enough, and was soon engaged in conversation with sundry other men of his own standing. Harry soon perceived that his guest had no further need of his coun-



tenance, and went home to Bloomsbury Square by no means satisfied with his new acquaintance.

On the next day he dined in Onslow Crescent with the Burtons, and when there he said nothing about Lady Ongar or Count Pateroff. He was not aware that he had any special reason for being silent on the subject, but he made up his mind that the Burtons were people so far removed in their sphere of life from Lady Ongar, that the subject would not be suitable in Onslow Crescent. It was his lot in life to be concerned with people of the two classes. He did not at all mean to say,—even to himself,—that he liked the Ongar class the better ; but still, as such was his lot, he must take it as it came, and entertain both subjects of interest, without any commingling of them one with another. Of Lady Ongar and his early love he had spoken to Florence at some length, but he did not find it necessary in his letters to tell her anything of Count Pateroff and his dinner at the Beaufort. Nor did he mention the dinner to his dear friend Cecilia. On this occasion he made himself very happy in Onslow Crescent, playing with the children, chatting with his friend, and enduring, with a good grace, Theodore Burton's sarcasm, when that ever-studious gentleman told him that he was only fit to go about tied to a woman's apron-string.

On the following day, about five o'clock, he called in Mount Street. He had doubted much as to this, thinking that at any rate he ought, in the first place, to write and ask permission. But at last he resolved that he would take the count at his word, and presenting himself at the door, he sent up his name. Madame Gordeloup was at home, and in a few moments he found himself in the room in which the lady was sitting, and recognized her whom he had seen with Lady Ongar in Bolton Street. She got up at once, having glanced at the name upon the card, and seemed to know all about him. She shook hands with him cordially, almost squeezing his hand, and bade him sit down near her on the sofa. "She was so glad to see him, for her dear Julie's sake. Julie, as of course he knew, was at 'Ongere' Park. Oh ! so happy,"—which, by the by, he did not know,— "and would be up in the course of next week. So many things to do, of course, Mr. Clavering. The house, and the servants, and the park, and the beautiful things of a large country establishment ! But it was delightful, and Julie was quite happy !"

No people could be more, unlike to each other than this brother and his sister. No human being could have taken Madame Gordeloup for an Englishwoman, though it might be difficult to judge, either from her language or her appearance, of the nationality to which she belonged. She spoke English with great fluency, but every word uttered declared her not to be English. And when she was most fluent she was most incorrect in her language. She was small, eager, and quick, and appeared quite as anxious to talk as her brother had been to hold his tongue. She lived in a small room on the first floor of a small house ; and it seemed to Harry that she lived alone. But he had not been long there before she

had told him all her history, and explained to him most of her circumstances. That she kept back something is probable; but how many are there who can afford to tell everything?

Her husband was still living, but he was at St. Petersburg. He was a Frenchman by family, but had been born in Russia. He had been attached to the Russian embassy in London, but was now attached to diplomacy in general in Russia. She did not join him because she loved England,—oh, so much! And, perhaps, her husband might come back again some day. She did not say that she had not seen him for ten years, and was not quite sure whether he was dead or alive; but had she made a clean breast in all things, she might have done so. She said that she was a good deal still at the Russian embassy; but she did not say that she herself was a paid spy. Nor do I say so now, positively; but that was the character given to her by many who knew her. She called her brother Edouard, as though Harry had known the count all his life; and always spoke of Lady Ongar as Julie. She uttered one or two little hints which seemed to imply that she knew everything that had passed between "Julie" and Harry Clavering in early days; and never mentioned Lord Ongar without some term of violent abuse.

"Horrid wretch!" she said, pausing over all the *r's* in the name she had called him. "It began, you know, from the very first. Of course he had been a fool. An old *roué* is always a fool to marry. What does he get, you know, for his money? A pretty face. He's tired of that as soon as it's his own. Is it not so, Mr. Clavering? But other people ain't tired of it, and then he becomes jealous. But Lord Ongar was not jealous. He was not man enough to be jealous. Hor-r-rid wr-retch!" She then went on telling many things which, as he listened, almost made Harry Clavering's hair stand on end, and which must not be repeated here. She herself had met her brother in Paris, and had been with him when they encountered the Ongars in that capital. According to her showing, they had, all of them, been together nearly from that time to the day of Lord Ongar's death. But Harry soon learned to feel that he could not believe all that the little lady told him.

"Edouard was always with him. Poor Edouard!" she said. "There was some money matter between them about *écarté*. When that wr-retch got to be so bad, he did not like parting with his money,—not even when he had lost it! And Julie had been so good always! Julie and Edouard had done everything for the nasty wr-retch." Harry did not at all like this mingling of the name of Julie and Edouard, though it did not for a moment fill his mind with any suspicion as to Lady Ongar. It made him feel, however, that this woman was dangerous, and that her tongue might be very mischievous if she talked to others as she did to him. As he looked at her,—and being now in her own room she was not dressed with scrupulous care,—and as he listened to her, he could not conceive what Lady Ongar had seen in her that she should have made a friend of her. Her brother, the count, was undoubtedly a gentleman in his

manners and way of life, but he did not know by what name to call this woman, who called Lady Ongar Julie. She was altogether unlike any ladies whom he had known.

"You know that Julie will be in town next week?"

"No; I did not know when she was to return."

"Oh, yes; she has business with those people in South Audley Street on Thursday. Poor dear! Those lawyers are so harassing! But when people have seven—thousand—pounds a year, they must put up with lawyers." As she pronounced those talismanic words, which to her were almost celestial, Harry perceived for the first time that there was some sort of resemblance between her and the count. He could see that they were brother and sister. "I shall go to her directly she comes, and of course I will tell her how good you have been to come to me. And Edouard has been dining with you? How good of you. He told me how charming you are,"—Harry was quite sure then that she was fibbing,— "and that it was so pleasant! Edouard is very much attached to Julie; very much. Though, of course, all that was mere nonsense; just lies told by that wicked lord. Bah! what did he know?" Harry by this time was beginning to wish that he had never found his way to Mount Street.

"Of course they were lies," he said roughly.

"Of course, *mon cher*. Those things always are lies, and so wicked! What good do they do?"

"Lies never do any good," said Harry.

To so wide a proposition as this madame was not prepared to give an unconditional assent; she therefore shrugged her shoulders and once again looked like her brother.

"Ah!" she said. "Julie is a happy woman now. Seven—thousand—pounds a year! One does not know how to believe it; does one?"

"I never heard the amount of her income," said Harry.

"It is all that," said the Franco-Pole, energetically, "every franc of it, besides the house! I know it. She told me herself. Yes. What woman would risk that, you know; and his life, you may say, as good as gone? Of course they were lies."

"I don't think you understand her, Madame Gordeloup."

"Oh, yes; I know her, so well. And love her—oh, Mr. Clavering, I love her so dearly! Is she not charming? So beautiful you know, and grand. Such a will, too! That is what I like in a woman. Such a courage! She never flinched in those horrid days, never. And when he called her,—you know what,—she only looked at him, just looked at him, miserable object. Oh, it was beautiful!" And Madame Gordeloup, rising in her energy from her seat for the purpose, strove to throw upon Harry such another glance as the injured, insulted wife had thrown upon her foul-tongued, dying lord.

"She will marry," said Madame Gordeloup, changing her tone with a suddenness that made Harry start; "yes, she will marry of course.

Your English widows always marry if they have money. They are wrong, and she will be wrong; but she will marry."

"I do not know how that may be," said Harry, looking foolish.

"I tell you I know she will marry, Mr. Clavering; I told Edouard so yesterday. He merely smiled. It would hardly do for him, she has so much will. Edouard has a will also."

"All men have, I suppose."

"Ah, yes; but there is a difference. A sum of money down, if a man is to marry, is better than a widow's dower. If she dies, you know, he looks so foolish. And she is grand and will want to spend everything. Is she much older than you, Mr. Clavering? Of course I know Julie's age, though perhaps you do not. What will you give me to tell?" And the woman leered at him with a smile which made Harry think that she was almost more than mortal. He found himself quite unable to cope with her in conversation, and soon after this got up to take his leave. "You will come again," she said. "Do. I like you so much. And when Julie is in town, we shall be able to see her together, and I will be your friend. Believe me."

Harry was very far from believing her, and did not in the least require her friendship. Her friendship indeed! How could any decent English man or woman wish for the friendship of such a creature as that? It was thus that he thought of her as he walked away from Mount Street, making heavy accusations, within his own breast, against Lady Ongar as he did so. Julia! He repeated the name over to himself a dozen times, thinking that the flavour of it was lost since it had been contaminated so often by that vile tongue. But what concern was it of his? Let her be Julia to whom she would, she could never be Julia again to him. But she was his friend—Lady Ongar, and he told himself plainly that his friend had been wrong in having permitted herself to hold any intimacy with such a woman as that. No doubt Lady Ongar had been subjected to very trying troubles in the last months of her husband's life, but no circumstances could justify her, if she continued to endorse the false cordiality of that horribly vulgar and evil-minded little woman. As regarded the grave charges brought against Lady Ongar, Harry still gave no credit to them; still looked upon them as calumnies, in spite of the damning advocacy of Sophie and her brother; but he felt that she must have dabbled in very dirty water to have returned to England with such claimants on her friendship as these. He had not much admired the count, but the count's sister had been odious to him. "I will be your friend. Believe me." Harry Clavering stamped upon the pavement as he thought of the little Pole's offer to him. She be his friend! No, indeed;—not if there were no other friend for him in all London.

Sophie, too, had her thoughts about him. Sophie was very anxious in this matter, and was resolved to stick as close to her Julie as possible. "I will be his friend or his enemy;—let him choose." That had been Sophie's reflection on the matter when she was left alone.

## CHAPTER XV.

## AN EVENING IN BOLTON STREET.

TEN days after his visit in Mount Street, Harry received the note which Lady Ongar had written to him on the night of her arrival in London. It was brought to Mr. Beilby's office by her own footman early in the morning; but Harry was there at the time, and was thus able to answer it, telling Lady Ongar that he would come as she had desired. She had commenced her letter "Dear Harry," and he well remembered that when she had before written she had called him "Dear Mr. Clavering." And though the note contained only half-a-dozen ordinary words, it seemed to him to be affectionate, and almost loving. Had she not been eager to see him, she would hardly thus have written to him on the very instant of her return. "Dear Lady Ongar," he wrote, "I shall dine at my club, and be with you about eight. Yours always, H. C." After that he could hardly bring himself to work satisfactorily during the whole day. Since his interview with the Franco-Polish lady he had thought a good deal about himself, and had resolved to work harder and to love Florence Burton more devotedly than ever. The nasty little woman had said certain words to him which had caused him to look into his own breast and to tell himself that this was necessary. As the love was easier than the work, he began his new tasks on the following morning by writing a long and very affectionate letter to his own Flo, who was still staying at Clavering rectory;—a letter so long and so affectionate that Florence, in her ecstasy of delight, made Fanny read it, and confess that, as a love-letter, it was perfect.

"It's great nonsense, all the same," said Fanny.

"It isn't nonsense at all," said Florence; "and if it were, it would not signify. Is it true? That's the question."

"I'm sure it's true," said Fanny.

"And so am I," said Florence. "I don't want any one to tell me that."

"Then why did you ask, you simpleton?" Florence indeed was having a happy time of it at Clavering rectory. When Fanny called her a simpleton, she threw her arms round Fanny's neck and kissed her.

And Harry kept his resolve about the work too, investigating plans with a resolution to understand them which was almost successful. During those days he would remain at his office till past four o'clock, and would then walk away with Theodore Burton, dining sometimes in Onslow Crescent, and going there sometimes in the evening after dinner. And when there he would sit and read; and once when Cecilia essayed to talk to him, he told her to keep her apron-strings to herself. Then Theodore laughed and apologized, and Cecilia said that too much work made Jack a dull boy; and then Theodore laughed again, stretching out his legs and arms as he rested a moment from his own study, and declared that, under those circumstances, Harry never would be dull. And Harry, on those

evenings, would be taken upstairs to see the bairns in their cots; and as he stood with their mother looking down upon the children, pretty words would be said about Florence and his future life; and all was going merry as a marriage bell. But on that morning, when the note had come from Lady Ongar, Harry could work no more to his satisfaction. He scrawled upon his blotting-paper, and made no progress whatsoever towards the understanding of anything. It was the day on which, in due course, he would write to Florence; and he did write to her. But Florence did not show this letter to Fanny, claiming for it any meed of godlike perfection. It was a stupid, short letter, in which he declared that he was very busy, and that his head ached. In a postscript he told her that he was going to see Lady Ongar that evening. This he communicated to her under an idea that by doing so he made everything right. And I think that the telling of it did relieve his conscience.

He left the office soon after three, having brought himself to believe in the headache, and sauntered down to his club. He found men playing whist there, and, as whist might be good for his head, he joined them. They won his money, and scolded him for playing badly till he was angry, and then he went out for a walk by himself. As he went along Piccadilly, he saw Sophie Gordeloup coming towards him, trotting along, with her dress held well up over her ankles, eager, quick, and, as he said to himself, clearly intent upon some mischief. He endeavoured to avoid her by turning up the Burlington Arcade, but she was too quick for him, and was walking up the arcade by his side before he had been able to make up his mind as to the best mode of ridding himself of such a companion.

"Ah, Mr. Clavering, I am so glad to see you. I was with Julie last night. She was fagged, very much fagged; the journey, you know, and the business. But yet so handsome! And we talked of you. Yes, Mr. Clavering; and I told her how good you had been in coming to me. She said you were always good; yes, she did. When shall you see her?"

Harry Clavering was a bad hand at fibbing, and a bad hand also at leaving a question unanswered. When questioned in this way he did not know what to do but to answer the truth. He would much rather not have said that he was going to Bolton Street that evening, but he could find no alternative. "I believe I shall see her this evening," he said, simply venturing to mitigate the evil of making the communication by rendering it falsely doubtful. There are men who fib with so bad a grace and with so little tact that they might as well not fib at all. They not only never arrive at success, but never even venture to expect it.

"Ah, this evening. Let me see. I don't think I can be there to-night; Madame Berenstoffs receives at the embassy."

"Good afternoon," said Harry, turning into Truefitt's, the hair-dresser's, shop.

"Ah, very well," said Sophie to herself; "just so. It will be better,



much better. He is simply one lout, and why should he have it all? My God, what fools, what louts, are these Englishmen!" Now having read Sophie's thoughts so far, we will leave her to walk up the remainder of the arcade by herself.

I do not know that Harry's visit to Truefit's establishment had been in any degree caused by his engagement for the evening. I fancy that he had simply taken to ground at the first hole, as does a hunted fox. But now that he was there he had his head put in order, and thought that he looked the better for the operation. He then went back to his club, and when he sauntered into the card-room one old gentleman looked askance at him, as though inquiring angrily whether he had come there to make fresh misery. "Thank you; no,—I won't play again," said Harry. Then the old gentleman was appeased, and offered him a pinch of snuff. "Have you seen the new book about whist?" said the old gentleman. "It is very useful,—very useful. I'll send you a copy if you will allow me." Then Harry left the room, and went down to dinner.

It was a little past eight when he knocked at Lady Ongar's door. I fear he had calculated that if he were punctual to the moment, she would think that he thought the matter to be important. It was important to him, and he was willing that she should know that it was so. But there are degrees in everything, and therefore he was twenty minutes late. He was not the first man who has weighed the diplomatic advantage of being after his time. But all those ideas went from him at once when she met him almost at the door of the room, and, taking him by the hand, said that she was "so glad to see him,—so very glad. Fancy, Harry, I haven't seen an old friend since I saw you last. You don't know how hard all that seems."

"It is hard," said he; and when he felt the pressure of her hand, and saw the brightness of her eye, and when her dress rustled against him as he followed her to her seat, and he became sensible of the influence of her presence, all his diplomacy vanished, and he was simply desirous of devoting himself to her service. Of course, any such devotion was to be given without detriment to that other devotion which he owed to Florence Burton. But this stipulation, though it was made, was made quickly, and with a confused brain.

"Yes,—it is hard," she said. "Harry, sometimes I think I shall go mad. It is more than I can bear. I could bear it if it hadn't been my own fault,—all my own fault."

There was a suddenness about this which took him quite by surprise. No doubt it had been her own fault. He also had told himself that; though, of course, he would make no such charge to her. "You have not recovered yet," he said, "from what you have suffered lately. Things will look brighter to you after a while."

"Will they? Ah,—I do not know. But come, Harry; come and sit down, and let me get you some tea. There is no harm, I suppose, in having you here,—is there?"

"Harm, Lady Ongar?"

"Yes,—harm, Lady Ongar." As she repeated her own name after him, nearly in his tone, she smiled once again; and then she looked as she used to look in the old days, when she would be merry with him. "It is hard to know what a woman may do, and what she may not. When my husband was ill and dying, I never left his bedside. From the moment of my marrying him till his death, I hardly spoke to a man but in his presence; and when once I did, it was he that had sent him. And for all that people have turned their backs upon me. You and I were old friends, Harry, and something more once,—were we not? But I jilted you, as you were man enough to tell me. How I did respect you when you dared to speak the truth to me. Men don't know women, or they would be harder to them."

"I did not mean to be hard to you."

"If you had taken me by the shoulders and shaken me, and have declared that before God you would not allow such wickedness, I should have obeyed you. I know I should." Harry thought of Florence, and could not bring himself to say that he wished it had been so. "But where would you have been then, Harry? I was wrong and false and a beast to marry that man; but I should not, therefore, have been right to marry you and ruin you. It would have been ruin, you know, and we should simply have been fools."

"The folly was very pleasant," said he.

"Yes, yes; I will not deny that. But then the wisdom and the prudence afterwards! Oh, Harry, that was not pleasant. That was not pleasant! But what was I saying? Oh! about the propriety of your being here. It is so hard to know what is proper. As I have been married, I suppose I may receive whom I please. Is not that the law?"

"You may receive me, I should think. Your sister is my cousin's wife." Harry's matter-of-fact argument did as well as anything else, for it turned her thought at the moment.

"My sister, Harry! If there was nothing to make us friends but our connection through Sir Hugh Clavering, I do not know that I should be particularly anxious to see you. How unmanly he has been, and how cruel."

"Very cruel," said Harry. Then he thought of Archie and Archie's suit. "But he is willing to change all that now. Hermione asked me the other day to persuade you to go to Clavering."

"And have you come here to use your eloquence for that purpose? I will never go to Clavering again, Harry, unless it should be yours and your wife should offer to receive me. Then I'd pack up for the dear, dull, solemn old place though I was on the other side of Europe."

"It will never be mine."

"Probably not, and probably, therefore, I shall never be there again. No; I can forgive an injury, but not an insult,—not an insult such as that. I will not go to Clavering; so, Harry, you may save your eloquence.

Hermione I shall be glad to see whenever she will come to me. If you can persuade her to that, you will persuade her to a charity."

"She goes nowhere, I think, without his—his——"

"Without his permission. Of course she does not. That, I suppose, is all as it should be. And he is such a tyrant that he will give no such permission. He would tell her, I suppose, that her sister was no fit companion for her."

"He could not say that now, as he has asked you there."

"Ah, I don't know that. He would say one thing first and another after, just as it would suit him. He has some object in wishing that I should go there, I suppose." Harry, who knew the object, and who was too faithful to betray Lady Clavering, even though he was altogether hostile to his cousin Archie's suit, felt a little proud of his position, but said nothing in answer to this. "But I shall not go; nor will I see him, or go to his house when he comes up to London. When do they come, Harry?"

"He is in town now."

"What a nice husband, is he not? And when does Hermione come?"

"I do not know; she did not say. Little Hughy is ill, and that may keep her."

"After all, Harry, I may have to pack up and go to Clavering even yet,—that is, if the mistress of the house will have me."

"Never in the way you mean, Lady Ongar. Do not propose to kill all my relations in order that I might have their property. Archie intends to marry, and have a dozen children."

"Archie marry! Who will have him? But such men as he are often in the way by marrying some cookmaid at last. Archie is Hugh's body-slave. Fancy being body-slave to Hugh Clavering! He has two, and poor Hermy is the other; only he prefers not to have Hermy near him, which is lucky for her. Here is some tea. Let us sit down and be comfortable, and talk no more about our horrid relations. I don't know what made me speak of them. I did not mean it."

Harry sat down and took the cup from her hand, as she had bidden the servant to leave the tray upon the table.

"So you saw Count Pateroff," she said.

"Yes, and his sister."

"So she told me. What do you think of them?" To this question Harry made no immediate answer. "You may speak out. Though I lived abroad with such as them for twelve months, I have not forgotten the sweet scent of our English hedgerows, nor the wholesomeness of English household manners. What do you think of them?"

"They are not sweet or wholesome," said he.

"Oh, Harry, you are so honest! Your honesty is beautiful. A spade will ever be a spade with you."

He thought that she was laughing at him, and coloured.

"You pressed me to speak," he said, "and I did but use your own words."

"Yes, but you used them with such straightforward violence! Well, you shall use what words you please, and how you please, because a word of truth is so pleasant after living in a world of lies. I know you will not lie to me, Harry. You never did."

He felt that now was the moment in which he should tell her of his engagement, but he let the moment pass without using it. And, indeed, it would have been hard for him to tell. In telling such a story he would have been cautioning her that it was useless for her to love him,—and this he could not bring himself to do. And he was not sure even now that she had not learned the fact from her sister. "I hope not," he said. In all that he was saying he knew that his words were tame and impotent in comparison with hers, which seemed to him to mean so much. But then his position was so unfortunate! Had it not been for Florence Burton he would have been long since at her feet; for, to give Harry Clavering his due, he could be quick enough at swearing to a passion. He was one of those men to whom love-making comes so readily that it is a pity that they should ever marry. He was ever making love to women, usually meaning no harm. He made love to Cecilia Burton over her children's beds, and that discreet matron liked it. But it was a love-making without danger. It simply signified on his part the pleasure he had in being on good terms with a pretty woman. He would have liked to have made love in the same way to Lady Ongar; but that was impossible, and in all love-making with Lady Ongar there must be danger. There was a pause after the expression of his last hopes, during which he finished his tea, and then looked at his boots.

"You do not ask me what I have been doing at my country-house."

"And what have you been doing there?"

"Hating it."

"That is wrong."

"Everything is wrong that I do; everything must be wrong. That is the nature of the curse upon me."

"You think too much of all that now."

"Ah, Harry, that is so easily said. People do not think of such things if they can help themselves. The place is full of him and his memories; full of him, though I do not as yet know whether he ever put his foot in it. Do you know, I have a plan, a scheme, which would, I think, make me happy for one half-hour. It is to give everything back to the family. Everything! money, house, and name; to call myself Julia Brabazon, and let the world call me what it pleases. Then I would walk out into the streets, and beg some one to give me my bread. Is there one in all the wide world that would give me a crust? Is there one, except yourself, Harry—one, except yourself?"

Poor Florence! I fear it fared badly with her cause at this moment. How was it possible that he should not regret, that he should not look back upon Stratton with something akin to sorrow? Julia had been his first love, and to her he could have been always true. I fear he thought

of this now. I fear that it was a grief to him that he could not place himself close at her side, bid her do as she had planned, and then come to him, and share all his crusts. Had it been open to him to play that part, he would have played it well, and would have gloried in the thoughts of her poverty. The position would have suited him exactly. But Florence was in the way, and he could not do it. How was he to answer Lady Ongar? It was more difficult now than ever to tell her of Florence Burton.

His eyes were full of tears, and she accepted that as his excuse for not answering her. "I suppose they would say that I was a romantic fool. When the price has been taken one cannot cleanse oneself of the stain. With Judas, you know, it was not sufficient that he gave back the money. Life was too heavy for him, and so he went out and hanged himself."

"Julia," he said, getting up from his chair, and going over to where she sat on a sofa, "Julia, it is horrid to hear you speak of yourself in that way. I will not have it. You are not such a one as the Iscariot." And as he spoke to her, he found her hand in his.

"I wish you had my burden, Harry, for one half day, so that you might know its weight."

"I wish I could bear it for you—for life."

"To be always alone, Harry; to have none that come to me and scold me, and love me, and sometimes make me smile! You will scold me at any rate; will you not? It is terrible to have no one near one that will speak to one with the old easiness of familiar affection. And then the pretence of it where it does not, cannot, could not, exist! Oh, that woman, Harry;—that woman who comes here and calls me Julie! And she has got me to promise too that I would call her Sophie! I know that you despise me because she comes here. Yes; I can see it. You said at once that she was not wholesome, with your dear outspoken honesty."

"It was your word."

"And she is not wholesome, whosever word it was. She was there, hanging about him when he was so bad, before the worst came. She read novels to him,—books that I never saw, and played *écarté* with him for what she called gloves. I believe in my heart she was spying me, and I let her come and go as she would, because I would not seem to be afraid of her. So it grew. And once or twice she was useful to me. A woman, Harry, wants to have a woman near her sometimes,—even though it be such an unwholesome creature as Sophie Gordeloup. You must not think too badly of me on her account."

"I will not;—I will not think badly of you at all."

"He is better, is he not? I know little of him or nothing, but he has a more reputable outside than she has. Indeed I liked him. He had known Lord Ongar well; and though he did not toady him nor was afraid of him, yet he was gentle and considerate. Once to me he said words that I was called on to resent;—but he never repeated them, and I know that he was prompted by him who should have protected me. It is too bad, Harry, is it not? Too bad almost to be believed by such as you."

"It is very bad," said Harry.

"After that he was always courteous; and when the end came and things were very terrible, he behaved well and kindly. He went in and out quietly, and like an old friend. He paid for everything, and was useful. I know that even this made people talk;—yes, Harry, even at such a moment as that! But in spite of the talking I did better with him then than I could have done without him."

"He looks like a man who could be kind if he chooses."

"He is one of those, Harry, who find it easy to be good-natured, and who are soft by nature, as cats are,—not from their heart, but through instinctive propensity to softness. When it suits them, they scratch, even though they have been ever so soft before. Count Pateroff is a cat. You, Harry, I think are a dog." She perhaps expected that he would promise to her that he would be her dog,—a dog in constancy and affection; but he was still mindful in part of Florence, and restrained himself.

"I must tell you something further," she said. "And indeed it is this that I particularly want to tell you. I have not seen him, you know, since I parted with him at Florence."

"I did not know," said Harry.

"I thought I had told you. However, so it is. And now, listen:—He came down to Ongar Park the other day while I was there, and sent in his card. When I refused to receive him, he wrote to me pressing his visit. I still declined, and he wrote again. I burned his note, because I did not choose that anything from him should be in my possession. He told some story about papers of Lord Ongar. I have nothing to do with Lord Ongar's papers. Everything of which I knew was sealed up in the count's presence and in mine, and was sent to the lawyers for the executors. I looked at nothing; not at one word in a single letter. What could he have to say to me of Lord Ongar's papers?"

"Or he might have written?"

"At any rate he should not have come there, Harry. I would not see him, nor, if I can help it, will I see him here. I will be open with you, Harry. I think that perhaps it might suit him to make me his wife. Such an arrangement, however, would not suit me. I am not going to be frightened into marrying a man, because he has been falsely called my lover. If I cannot escape the calumny in any other way, I will not escape it in that way."

"Has he said anything?"

"No; not a word. I have not seen him since the day after Lord Ongar's funeral. But I have seen his sister."

"And has she proposed such a thing?"

"No, she has not proposed it. But she talks of it, saying that it would not do. Then, when I tell her that of course it would not do, she shows me all that would make it expedient. She is so sly and so false, that with all my eyes open I cannot quite understand her, or quite know what she is doing. I do not feel sure that she wishes it herself."



"She told me that it would not do."

"She did, did she? If she speaks of it again, tell her that she is right, that it will never do. Had he not come down to Ongar Park, I should not have mentioned this to you. I should not have thought that he had in truth any such scheme in his head. He did not tell you that he had been there?"

"He did not mention it. Indeed, he said very little about you at all."

"No, he would not. He is cautious. He never talks of anybody to anybody. He speaks only of the outward things of the world. Now, Harry, what you must do for me is this." As she was speaking to him she was leaning again upon the table, with her forehead resting upon her hands. Her small widow's cap had become thus thrust back, and was now nearly off her head, so that her rich brown hair was to be seen in its full luxuriance, rich and lovely as it had ever been. Could it be that she felt,—half thought, half felt, without knowing that she thought it,—that while the signs of her widowhood were about her, telling in their too plain language the tale of what she had been, he could not dare to speak to her of his love? She was indeed a widow, but not as are other widows. She had confessed, did hourly confess to herself, the guilt which she had committed in marrying that man; but the very fact of such confessions, of such acknowledgment, absolved her from the necessity of any show of sorrow. When she declared how she had despised and hated her late lord, she threw off mentally all her weeds. Mourning, the appearance even of mourning, became impossible to her, and the cap upon her head was declared openly to be a sacrifice to the world's requirements. It was now pushed back, but I fancy that nothing like a thought on the matter had made itself plain to her mind. "What you must do for me is this," she continued. "You must see Count Pateroff again, and tell him from me,—as my friend,—that I cannot consent to see him. Tell him that if he will think of it, he must know the reason why."

"Of course he will know."

"Tell him what I say, all the same; and tell him that as I have hitherto had cause to be grateful to him for his kindness, so also I hope he will not put an end to that feeling by anything now, that would not be kind. If there be papers of Lord Ongar's, he can take them either to my lawyers, if that be fit, or to those of the family. You can tell him that, can you not?"

"Oh, yes; I can tell him."

"And have you any objection?"

"None for myself. The question is,—would it not come better from some one else?"

"Because you are a young man, you mean? Whom else can I trust, Harry? To whom can I go? Would you have me ask Hugh to do this? Or, perhaps you think Archie Clavering would be a proper messenger. Who else have I got?"

"Would not his sister be better?"

"How should I know that she had told him? She would tell him her own story,—what she herself wished. And whatever story she told, he would not believe it. They know each other better than you and I know them. It must be you, Harry, if you will do it."

"Of course I will do it. I will try and see him to-morrow. Where does he live?"

"How should I know? Perhaps nobody knows; no one, perhaps, of all those with whom he associates constantly. They do not live after our fashion, do they, these foreigners? But you will find him at his club, or hear of him at the house in Mount Street. You will do it; eh, Harry?"

"I will."

"That is my good Harry. But I suppose you would do anything I asked you. Ah, well; it is good to have one friend, if one has no more. Look, Harry! if it is not near eleven o'clock! Did you know that you had been here nearly three hours? And I have given you nothing but a cup of tea!"

"What else do you think I have wanted?"

"At your club you would have had cigars and brandy-and-water, and billiards, and broiled bones, and oysters, and tankards of beer. I know all about it. You have been very patient with me. If you go quick perhaps you will not be too late for the tankards and the oysters."

"I never have any tankards or any oysters."

"Then it is cigars and brandy-and-water. Go quick, and perhaps you may not be too late."

"I will go, but not there. One cannot change one's thoughts so suddenly."

"Go, then; and do not change your thoughts. Go and think of me, and pity me. Pity me for what I have got, but pity me most for what I have lost." Harry did not say another word, but took her hand, and kissed it, and then left her.

Pity her for what she had lost! What had she lost? What did she mean by that? He knew well what she meant by pitying her for what she had got. What had she lost? She had lost him. Did she intend to evoke his pity for that loss? She had lost him. Yes, indeed. Whether or no the loss was one to regret, he would not say to himself; or rather, he, of course, declared that it was not; but such as it was, it had been incurred. He was now the property of Florence Burton, and, whatever happened, he would be true to her.

Perhaps he pitied himself also. If so, it is to be hoped that Florence may never know of such pity. Before he went to bed, when he was praying on his knees, he inserted it in his prayers that the God in whom he believed might make him true in his faith to Florence Burton.

## The Re-discovery of Dante's Remains at Ravenna.

---

BEFORE entering on the more immediate subject of this paper, it may not be uninteresting to relate a few of the circumstances connected with my search for the document that has furnished materials for this article. They illustrate in a very remarkable manner the interest taken in literary and archæological matters in the new capital of Italy.

Having heard in England that a Commission had been appointed by the Italian Government last year to inquire and report upon Dante's tomb at Ravenna, the extraordinary re-discovery of the poet's remains, and their condition; shortly after my arrival in Florence at the beginning of last winter, I made inquiries respecting the labours of the Commissioners, and especially for their Report, which I incidentally heard had been presented to the Italian Government and ordered to be printed.

Although my inquiries did not at first lead to any information whatever on the subject, I naturally supposed that I had not gone to the proper quarters, though it might be reasonably apprehended that every person in Florence, of even moderate education, would be more or less acquainted with the labours and results of such a commission as this. But when applications to gentlemen holding high official appointments, including the secretary of the municipality of Florence, were equally fruitless, I confess that my astonishment became as great as my disappointment, for not only did I fail in seeing a copy of the Report, but I could gain no intelligence whatever respecting its existence.

As a matter of course, I expected to find the document in Vieussieux's extensive and excellent library; but it was not there, nor did a copy exist in the vast Magliabecchian, or, as it is now more generally called, National Library.

It would probably weary the reader were I to relate all the incidents connected with my search for this Report. Enough, however, has been said to show that intellectual activity among the Florentines is still at a low ebb, and that though the printing-presses in their city have greatly increased in number, and there doubtless are many signs that life's pulses are beating quickly at this centre of the peninsula, the causes are more allied to politics than to art or literature.\*

At length I received apparently authentic information that the object of my search existed in the Department of the Minister of Public Instruction. Acting on this, I procured a letter to the secretary, but this gentleman was at Turin with his chief (a not uncommon answer, by the

---

\* Official statistics state that there are now (1866) 112 printing-presses in Florence.

way, given you at present in Florence, the official links between that city and Turin not being yet wholly severed), and his deputy had gone to breakfast—it was twelve o'clock. A second and third visit were equally unsuccessful: the secretary was still absent, and there was no person attached to his department who could give me any information.

Such was the condition of affairs, when, on the occasion of my fourth visit, the secretary and chief being still at Turin, I made my wants known to the porter who had answered my inquiries, and whose intelligence was evidently of no common order. Apprised of these he proceeded to inform me that he thought there was a gentleman in an office on the upper floor of the *ci-devant* convent,\* who might be able to give me precise information. Accordingly, furnished with his name, after having threaded several labyrinthine passages, I discovered his office. He was at his post—received me very courteously, and after some delay—for he was not quite sure where copies of the Reports were to be found—kindly placed one in my hands.

Those who have been engaged in a long hunt for a rare book which has resulted in finding it on perhaps a small book-stall in an obscure alley, will best appreciate the delight that I felt when I became possessed of the document, a translation of the principal portion of which is subjoined. And, if my readers share my opinion respecting its great interest, they will agree with me that it is most extraordinary that its existence should not have been well known in Florence, at least by the educated class among whom my inquiries were made. We might almost be disposed to believe that Byron's lines—

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,  
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore,

are still applicable to the citizens of this poet's native town. For what boots it erecting a colossal monumental statue† of the immortal author of the *Divina Commedia*, if they are entirely ignorant of facts which should stir them deeply.

As my little history may entail criticism, it is right to add, that although the Report bears the date of the 12th June, 1865, it was not printed until the autumn of last year, and, moreover, that it has not passed through a publisher's hands.

Let us now turn to the Report itself. It is preceded by the following preface:—"Referring to the solemn and almost miraculous re-discovery of the remains of Dante on the 27th May, 1865, the Minister of Public Instruction, by command of his Majesty the King of Italy, declares and appoints Commendatore Conte Giovanni Gozzadini, Conte Rasponi, Syndic

---

\* The building now occupied by the Minister of Public Instruction in Florence was formerly one of the largest convents in that city.

† *A propos* of this statue—one of Pazzi's most successful works—I may remark that all through this winter it was surrounded, and almost entirely hidden, by scaffolding, nor did I ever perceive any signs of labour within the hoarding; but we should be slow to criticize our neighbours in their art-matters, seeing that our great metropolitan Nelson monument remains unfinished.

of Ravenna, Commendatore Vanucci, Commendatore Professore Giuliani, Cavaliere Professore Paganucci, Conte Cappi, Librarian of the Public Library of Ravenna, to be his Majesty's Commissioners, and further appoints Conte Gozzadini president. These are to act in concert with the municipality of the city of Ravenna, which was a loving mother to the Alighieri family in time of trouble. And they are, moreover, hereby desired to draw up a Report of their labours, preceded by a copy of their official instructions."

*"Instructions to the Commissioners appointed to inquire into, and verify the facts relating to the re-discovery of the bones of Dante.*

"To collect, as far as possible, all information, whether written or traditional, relating to the sepulchre of Dante, and to the incidents connected with the burial or removal of his remains, between the years 1321 and 1677, inclusive.

"To ascertain whether the bones of Dante were removed in 1677 from the sepulchre in which they were placed by the Frati Minori, and if so, to discover the locality to which they were conveyed.

"To examine the wooden chest in the Braccioforte sepulchral chapel, said to contain the bones of Dante, particularly for the purpose of ascertaining whether the chest bears any marks by which it may be referred to the year 1677, or to any other year.

"To ascertain, as far as possible, whether the human bones in the above chest are such as might have belonged to a man who ceased to live at the age when Dante died, and to examine with great minuteness the cranium, and compare it with the cast taken from the mask of Dante bequeathed by the Marquis Torrigiani to Florence, and preserved in the Royal Uffizi Gallery.

"The Commissioners are, moreover, invited and authorized to make any further investigations within or without the above sepulchral chapel, which may be at all likely to throw further light on the particular subject of this inquiry, due care being at the same time taken that no investigations be made without the full concurrence of the municipality of Ravenna."

*Report of the Commission appointed to verify the facts connected with the re-discovery of the bones of Dante.*

The Commissioners appointed to examine and verify the facts connected with the re-discovery of the bones of Dante assembled on the morning of the 6th June, 1865, in Ravenna, when they were most courteously received by the honourable municipality of that town, all the members of which testified the most ardent desire to assist their inquiries by every means in their power.

All historians, biographers, commentators, and writers of epitaphs agree in stating that Dante Alighieri died in Ravenna, on the 14th September, 1321, and was honourably interred in *arca lapidea*, near the Church

of the Frati Minori; the epitaph attributed to Giovanni del Virgilio, which has been reproduced with others of a later date, having been placed over his tomb. This sepulchre, erected by Guido Novello da Polenta, appears to have been only provisional, as it was intended to replace it by another in all respects more worthy to contain the remains of the divine poet; but Guido, having been expelled from Ravenna, and dying young, was unable to carry out his noble intentions.\* Under these circumstances, in 1483, Bernardo Bembo, at that period prætor in Ravenna for the republic of Venice, ordered Pietro Lombardi to make a marble monument in honour of the poet, the front of which bore a basso-relievo of Dante, with a new epitaph. The ravages of time having greatly injured this monument, it was restored and redecorated in 1692, at the expense of the city of Ravenna, by the instigation of the Florentines Domenico Maria Corsi, cardinal legate of Emilia, and Giovanni Salviati, pro-legate. Lastly, in 1780, the cardinal legate, Luigi Valenti Gonzaga, ordered the small temple which still stands to be erected, in which the sculpture by Pietro Lombardi is preserved.

This simple history of the first tomb of Dante gave rise to a long discussion, with the view of testing its accuracy, and eliciting, if possible, further details. None, however, of any great moment, were brought to light.

How long the poet's remains, which were assuredly deposited with great care in the first tomb prepared for them by Guido Novello, remained in their resting-place, is uncertain. It is probable, however, that a few years subsequent to 1321 they were privately removed, prior to the arrival in Ravenna of Cardinal Bertrando del Poggetto, legate of Pope John XXII., at Bologna, who had come for the avowed purpose of barbarously disinterring, excommunicating, and burning the remains of Dante. These projects were, however, happily frustrated by the Florentines Pino della Tosa and Ostagio da Polenta, who boldly came forward as champions of Dante's fame. When the apprehensions arising from Pope John's designs had subsided, the remains of Dante were probably replaced in the monu-

---

\* This Guido Novello was a person of great consequence in Ravenna, and occupied one of the largest palaces in that city. When Dante was expelled from Florence, he offered the poet an asylum in Ravenna, and became his firm friend, though, unfortunately, this friendship was indirectly the cause of the poet's death; for, having great confidence in Dante's diplomatic abilities, he sent him to negotiate a peace with the Venetians, who were preparing for hostilities against Ravenna. But as Dante was unable to procure an audience at Venice, he returned to Ravenna by land, apprehending that he might be intercepted by the Venetian fleet had he attempted to go back by sea. The mortification of having failed in his attempt to preserve his generous patron from impending danger, and the fatigue of the journey, threw Dante into a fever, which terminated his existence. He died in the palace of his friend, who bitterly mourned his death, and evinced the most tender regard for his memory. He had a cast taken of his face, and caused the body of the poet, surrounded by various poetical designs, to be carried in state, on a bier, through the principal streets of Ravenna, after which it was deposited in a marble sarcophagus prepared by himself.

ment erected for them by Bembo, in which they remained until new apprehensions induced the friars of San Francisco to remove the precious treasures again, which shed lustre on their convent. This removal took place in 1519, at which period the Florentines petitioned Pope Leo X. to exercise his papal authority to cause Dante's remains to be transferred to their city; and as this pope was a Florentine, and a member of the powerful house of the Medici, and Michael Angelo had, moreover, offered to erect a suitable monument, in an honourable locality, to the poet, in Florence, the friars of San Francisco had the more reason to apprehend that the remains of Dante would be abstracted.

Whether the latter were replaced in the sepulchre restored by Cardinal Corsi seems to be questionable, for it appears that fierce quarrels prevailed between the Frati Minori and the Commune of Ravenna respecting jurisdiction over the tomb. The enmity between these bodies was so great, that when the commune wished to restore the sepulchre, they were under the necessity of sending thirty-two policemen to protect the workmen engaged in the task. Thus protected, the sepulchre was finally completed in 1692. It then appears to have been securely closed, encircled by an iron railing, and the key of the door committed to the keeping of the heads of the commune. And in order to assert their jurisdiction over the chapel containing the sepulchre, they caused the following inscription to be placed over the door:—*S. P. Q. R. jure et ære suo tamquam thesaurum suum munivit, instauravit, ornavit.*

But, although the friars were in this instance beaten, they refused to acknowledge the supremacy of the commune of Ravenna, and stoutly maintained that the tomb of Dante was their exclusive property, their establishment having, as they stated, been granted the ground on which it stood in 1261, by the Archbishop Filippo Fontana, with the adjoining houses and gardens. They further appealed to Rome against the commune of Ravenna, alleging that the latter, by restoring the mausoleum, had violated their rights and ecclesiastical privileges. The question became still more involved in 1692, when a prisoner with two accomplices having escaped from prison, fled to the mausoleum, and grasping the iron railing encircling it, claimed right of sanctuary. But having been seized by the police and recommitted to prison, a question of privilege was raised and referred to the Council of Ecclesiastical Immunity in Rome. The latter consulted Archbishop Raimondo Ferretti, who replied on the 9th August, 1694, that Dante having been declared a heretic after his death, the place of his sepulture, though originally sacred, was now undoubtedly polluted, and consequently no longer possessed the privilege of sanctuary. The friars endeavoured to upset this decision by affirming that the chapel no longer contained Dante's bones. But the archbishop would not allow this to be any reason why the place should be entitled to ecclesiastical immunity. Be this as it may, it is evident that the friars were greatly interested in keeping the remains of Dante rigidly concealed, apprehending that they might fall into unsafe and unworthy hands. It



also further appears that in 1780, when Cardinal Valenti Gonzaga erected the superstructure of the small temple of Pietro Lombardi, the tomb was solemnly opened, in order to re-establish the fact whether it contained Dante's remains. The result of the examination is not clear, for, according to the obscure language of a contemporary historian, there was found that which made doubt no longer necessary (*vi si rinvenne ciò che era necessario per non dubitare*),—words which admit of two interpretations. However, it is to be observed that constant traditions maintained that Dante's bones were no longer in his sepulchre; and this is confirmed by a manuscript note lately found in a book, which there is evidence to prove was written at the close of the last century. This note states that at that period the tomb of Dante was opened, and nothing found within. This, observe the Commissioners, is unwelcome information, and if no steps have since been taken to verify the statement, it was probably because there was an unwillingness to accept as certain so painful a truth.\*

Happily, however, we now pass from this region of doubts, and are able to cast clear light on the remainder of our interesting history.

The city of Ravenna, having resolved on celebrating the sixth centenary of Dante's birth, good fortune brought a circumstance to light which created a great sensation, and the more so, as it occurred only a few days before the inauguration of the monument erected to the poet's honour in Florence. With the view of increasing the interest in Dante's tomb, the municipality of Ravenna determined on removing the wall adjoining the chapel of Braccioforte. By its removal the tomb would become isolated, and thus better seen. Accordingly the work of demolition was commenced on the 27th of May last year, and had not proceeded long, when from a recess within a closed door in the wall tumbled a rude wooden chest, which flying open as it came to the ground, disclosed human bones and inscriptions on the inner as well as outer sides of the chest, to the effect that the remains were those of Dante.

The discovery having been communicated to the authorities of Ravenna, a searching examination was made of the chest and its contents, and these having been carefully noted, the chest was confided to the charge of a detachment of the National Guard, with whom it remained until the Royal Commissioners went to Ravenna. Before, however, pro-

\* Although the authorities of Ravenna, civil as well as ecclesiastical, had doubtless been long aware that Dante's bones were not in their original resting-place, it is certain that such has not been the opinion of the public generally. Histories and all descriptions of "Guides" make mention of Dante's remains in connection with the poet's original sepulchre; and even Byron, who was a devoted worshipper of Dante, believed that they lay here undisturbed. "Dante," says the author of *Childe Harold*, "was buried (*in sacra Minorum æde*) at Ravenna, in a handsome tomb, where his bones remain." And in *Don Juan* he writes,—

"I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:  
A little cupola, more neat than solemn,  
Protects his dust, but reverence here is paid  
To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's column."

ceeding to examine the chest and its contents, the Commissioners resolved on having the ancient sepulchre of Dante opened. This was effected on the morning of the 7th June, in the presence of the Syndic of Ravenna, and all the municipal authorities of that town, and a deputation of those of Florence. The result was that the tomb was only found to contain according to the evidence of the chief surgeon, Cavaliere Giovanni Puglioli, and Doctor Claudio Bertozzi, two phalanges of a hand, and one of a foot, with some fragments of laurel-leaves mingled with organic remains in a state of powder. The bones and the latter substances were carefully collected, and placed by the Syndic of Ravenna in the hands of the president of the Commission, in order that they might be submitted to more detailed examination and chemical analysis, and the sepulchre was then carefully closed.

The very small results arising from the opening of this tomb, which, it is stated, occupied from eight o'clock in the morning until three o'clock in the afternoon, rendered it the more necessary to make a careful examination of the bones discovered on the 27th May in the chest. Accordingly, on the 11th June, in the presence of the same parties who had witnessed the opening of the sepulchre, the chest and bones were submitted to a most careful examination, with the following results:—The chest was of such rude workmanship as to render it evident that it had been made by a person wholly unskilled in the art of carpentry; one of the sides measured 77·5 centimetres, while the opposite side, which should have been of the same length, only measured 74·8 centimetres. The two inscriptions were not cut in the centre of the superficies of the sides of the chest, but were placed in irregular positions. That on the outside is as follows:—

DANTIS OSSA  
A ME FRE. ANTONIO SANTI  
HIC POSITA  
AÑO 1677 DIE 18 OCTOBRI8.

The other inscription within the chest runs thus:—

DANTIS OSSA  
DENUPER (sic) REVISA 3<sup>a</sup> IUNIJ  
1677.

The first inscription is in larger characters than the second, but the letters are not so deeply cut; both inscriptions, however, have evidently been graven by the same hand. The characters of the two inscriptions were also found to be, in almost all respects, similar to those in a book written by the same Fre. Antonio Santi preserved in the archives of the municipality. The identity of the characters is very apparent in the small as well as large letters, but especially in the capital D's, which, in the book as well as in the inscriptions within and without the chest, consist, so to speak, of three portions, being, according to three persons from Bologna, Bergamo, and Ravenna skilled in writing, the work of the same hand.

Thus we have the strongest evidence that Italy is indebted to this

Frate Santi for the preservation of Dante's remains ; for he it was who, at a time of impending danger, had placed the precious bones in a locality where they would be safe.

The Commissioners were, therefore, very naturally extremely desirous of ascertaining who this Frate Santi was. Their researches, which were long and laborious, showed that his parents were Leonardo and Elisabetta Ingoli ; that he was born on the 3rd August, 1644, in Ravenna ; became a member of the Frati Minori, and that in 1677, when he placed the chest within the wall, he was Chancellor of the Convent of San Francisco. The archives of this establishment contain his official signature as chancellor to capitulary documents between 1672 and 1679. Subsequently Frate Santi was elected guardian or head of his convent.\*

The Commissioners draw especial attention to the fact, that between the 19th May and 20th June, 1677, and between the 3rd and 20th October of the same year, there are no official records showing that the chapter of the convent met during those periods, and they deduce from this fact the inference, that the abstraction of Dante's remains from their original sepulchre and placing them in their new resting-place, was a secret known only to Santi and a few other persons ; the more likely to be kept, as no meetings of the chapter were held at the time when the poet's remains were removed.

We now come to one of the most interesting parts of the Report : the examination of the bones found in the chest. This appears to have been made with great care and skill, the Commissioners having had the assistance of the highest anatomical authorities.

The bones, they state, are those of a robust adult male, rather advanced in manhood. Exteriorly, they are rather black, presenting the appearance that bones generally have when long enclosed in metallic, marble, or wooden receptacles. Their texture has not undergone any remarkable alteration, and what is even more surprising is the fact, that with the exception of the round-headed articulations at the extremity of certain long bones, and in some localities of the cranium, no important change from time or damp is apparent.

It was found that the bones, compared with a perfect human skeleton, wanted precisely those portions which were found in the original sepulchre ; and it was further noticed that the hue of the surface of those phalanges was similar to that of the bones found in Frate Santi's wooden chest. The length of the skeleton was one metre and fifty-five centimetres. If to this length be added that of the soft parts, such as the cartilages, &c. of the human subject when living, it follows that the bones were those of a man of middle stature. The weight of the bones, without the head, was four kilogrammes and 150 grammes ; the cranium weighed 730 grammes.

---

\* Further details of the life of Frate Santi will be found in a work entitled *Uomini illustri di Ravenna antica*. Bologna, 1703.

Examination of the skeleton of the trunk and of the four extremities showed that the clavicles were considerably curved—due to the resistance of the humeri and scapulars—as were also the bones of the thigh, legs, and feet. The sacrum was found joined to the first portion of the coccyx. The femurs were forty-four centimetres and five millimetres long.

As might be expected, the portion of these osseous remains which engaged the greatest attention, and were subject to the most detailed examination, was the cranium, which in all human skeletons must be considered the most noble portion, as being the seat of the brain, always regarded by anatomists as closely connected with the thinking organs of man. In order to ascertain the probable weight of this organ, the cavity which enclosed the brain was filled with grains of rice, which weighed one kilogramme and 420 grammes, equal to 3·1319 lbs. avoirdupois. Very accurate measurements were made of various parts of the cranium, the principal only of which are subjoined. The diameter from the occiput to the frontal bone was thirty-one centimetres and seven millimetres; the transverse diameter, taken between the ears, thirty-one centimetres and eight millimetres, and the vertical diameter, fourteen centimetres.

The periphery of the cranium, measured along two lines starting respectively from points on each side of the most projecting part of the occipital protuberance, and terminating at the nasal prominence, was fifty-two centimetres and five millimetres.

Particular attention is drawn in the Report to the circumstance that the upper jaw had been furnished with only two incisors (the central incisors) instead of four, and that the right last molar tooth had not been naturally developed.

Various prominences were extremely conspicuous on Dante's skull; one in particular was remarkable for its great size. It was situated near the middle and upper part of the frontal bone, and was of longitudinal form. Though not acknowledging themselves to be disciples of Gall or Spurzheim, the Commissioners draw particular attention to these prominences, and state that, according to the laws of phrenology, Dante largely possessed the organs of benevolence, religion, veneration, independence, self-esteem, pride, conscientiousness, mechanical design, sculpture, and architecture.

Finally, the Commissioners declare with justifiable pride, that Dante's skull denotes the highest order of brain power, being precisely similar in conformation to the skulls of those individuals who have held supreme dominion over the minds of men, and have been the true masters of mankind.

In order to enable the public to see the honoured remains of Dante, the Commissioners and authorities of Ravenna directed that they should lie in state, efficiently protected by glass.

Accordingly, on the 25th June, which was Sunday, they were exposed to public view in the Braccioforte Chapel, and it was the opinion of all those who had the high privilege of gazing on the head of the author of

the *Divina Commedia*, that it possessed all the physical features of the highest intellectual organization. And as it cannot be our privilege to look on this relic of surpassing interest, it will be satisfactory to our readers, and especially to those who have been in Florence, or who purpose visiting that fair city, to be informed that the mask of the illustrious poet preserved in the Uffizi Gallery, to which allusion has been made, has been found on most careful comparison to be in all respects similar in configuration to the cranium discovered in the wooden chest at Ravenna. The length of the nasal bones agreed precisely, and the same remark applies to all other parts which admitted of measurement.

Thus, although, as the Commissioners observe, some circumstances in connexion with Dante's original sepulchre have yet to be made clear, especially as regards its early history, there is no doubt whatever that the human remains they examined were the genuine and sacred bones of Dante.

I trust that the reader ere this has come to the conclusion that the Reason from whence the foregoing particulars have been drawn, is one of rare and surpassing interest. The discovery of any portion of Dante's remains at a time when Italy was about to honour his memory by commemorating the sixth centenary of his birth with great pomp and solemnity, may be indeed regarded, in the words of the Commissioners, as almost miraculous; but when we find that among those remains is the head of Italy's immortal poet, the discovery may well be considered as one of the most interesting that has ever been made.

For that head belonged to a man who, six centuries ago, when Italy was torn by political factions, each ambitious for power, and all entirely unscrupulous as to the means employed to obtain it, laboured with untiring zeal to bring about Italian unity; yet, whose patriotism met no other reward than exile, how bitterly felt appears from those heart-rending lines in the *Paradiso* :—

Si come sa di sale  
Lo pane altrui, e com' è duro calle  
Lo scendere e'l salir per l'altrui scale.

But even more interesting is the knowledge that this head, so wonderfully preserved, was that of one of the most divinely-inspired poets that the world has seen.



## A German Life before the Peace of 1815.

---

WHEN we look at our neighbours in Germany and see the quiet way in which they live, how they cling to and keep up their family ties, how openly they practise all the little kindness of life which we think proper to keep out of sight, how they unite the demonstrative affection of Mary with the care for the household of Martha, we might almost suppose they have trudged on in this primitive fashion since the middle ages. And we might fairly think that the protracted existence of these old-world ways could only be accounted for by a long undisturbed condition of society; we might presume that people must have gone on making cakes with big round holes in the middle of them since gabled houses were new;—(those odd-shaped cakes have been left with a North German name to them even when the Dutch set foot in the East Indies)—that they had drank quantities of weak coffee at all hours of the day since first coffee found its way from Mocha by Trieste to Cologne; that they had given each other birthday presents all round, like only good little children do in England, since Protestants began to keep birthdays instead of Saints' days; and dressed Christmas-trees once a year, since—does any one know how long?

But if we look into any history of Europe, the driest school epitome, even, which only gives facts and no philosophy of history to distract one, we shall see how far from a quiet country has been this Germany, which, without what are called natural boundaries, has isolated by race and language the whole centre of Europe, from the North Sea at Hamburg to the Mediterranean at Trieste, and from Alsace to Poland. Wars and fightings were throughout the land when the Rhine castles were built: they fell to ruin, and corn and the vineyards of the south spread over the country till armies came into it again. "The first battle of Leipzig was in 1631," says the lesson-book. "The Palatinate," the land we now know as the Grand Duchy of Baden, "was ravaged by Tilly." There was the "Thirty Years' War," and the "Seven Years' War," and just about a hundred years ago, the great Frederick, after the peace of 1763, counted up the towns destroyed and the men killed, and set himself as bravely to face and redress public and private wrongs as he had ever faced any enemy. We read of it all as history, but let us try and divest ourselves of this telescopic habit of looking, and come close and see what happened in countries where armies, and those foreign armies, "marched and counter-marched," or "halted" awhile to rest. Soldiers do not always "march" even so regularly as when we now and then see them coming home from a review, hot and kicking up a dust, and twitching off a few flowers' heads as they go by a garden. Any one who has lived in a garrison town will recollect changes of regiments as involving a few days of not very serious



but not very pleasant disorder ; it is within our recollection that soldiers on the move in England would come into a yard and lead off a waggon and team for the day's march, and it was lawful so to do ; but they were in their own country, where they spoke the language, at least, of the people they disturbed : if they were ever so "jolly" and riotous, all reasonable people would allow for some irregularity when men rest from a long march. We remember a testy commodore replying to a clergyman who remonstrated with him on the behaviour of sailors allowed leave ashore when the ship came into harbour. "I'd like to know, sir, if you'd expect two hundred and forty parsons to keep order if they came into port after a cruise." But if soldiers and sailors (and "even parsons") are likely not to keep up the strictest discipline when they are on the move in their own country, what is likely to happen in a foreign neutral if not hostile place, when regiment after regiment, cannon after cannon, come through ; regiments that struggle through hedges and over fields, cannon whose drivers no more respect gardens than Peter the Great did Mr. Evelyn's yews ; over the young corn in the spring, among the tempting apple-orchards in the summer, through, straight through, the tangled vineyards in the autumn. Villagers frightened leave their houses to the strangers ; the rich think wiser to open their gates and dispense unwillingly hospitality to guests who receive and repay it in kind, and the work and the pleasure of years is annihilated "all for a famous victory." All this, and over and over again, Germany has suffered within a hundred years of this time. From this it has recovered to be the prosperous land we see ; through all this it has preserved its curiously-simple habits, and now all is over and the old ways become dearer than ever, national character and national customs rise up north and south and east and west, like strong shoots from the outstretching roots of an old tree that has been lopped in time.

The life of a German family during this period between the end of the last century and the peace of 1815 is worth looking into, and in a memoir of Caroline Perthes, by the late Professor Monnard, there is a sketch of the quiet household of her father (the comparatively little remembered Wandsheeker Bote) and of the trouble and strife into which she was plunged as the wife of the Hamburg bookseller, a sketch that if we follow for twenty years will take us into scenes that it may be for our good to remember were enacting on the Continent while we in our island home could dread but never see "Bonaparte and the French." The Claudius family, of whom Caroline, afterwards wife of Frederick Perthes, was the eldest daughter, lived at Wandsheek, a few miles north-east of Hamburg, but in Holstein. The household must have been an attractive one. Claudius was gifted with a rich fund of humour, which made him an unusually-entertaining companion ; but besides this, he had a profound faith in God and his mercy, and was deeply penetrated with religious principles, and that at a time when faiths and religions were dislodged from their hold on thinking men, when in France it was not safe, in Germany not common, to confess a belief in anything that had been a dogma of a church. In 1796 lived at quiet



Wandsheek the families of Claudius and Jacobi. Jacobi had convinced himself of the soundness of the prevailing opinions, but this did not exclude him from the circle of intimates in which were the Stollbergs and Reventlows, and Caroline, Claudius's bosom friend, was that Princess Gallitzin who retired from the world under the counsels of Diderot, devoted herself to the education of her children, begged her friends not to try and convert her to anything, and read and reasoned herself back into the church she had been born in.

It was at the house of Jacobi was prepared that year the Christmas-tree, that old Lutheran observance, which perhaps dates as far back as do the horses' heads over North German farmhouse doors, which has spread itself by degrees into Western Germany, has become Catholic as well as Protestant, and in a much-changed form has located itself recently in England. A German artist lately painted a group of his countrymen unveiling one in the wilds of Minnesota to an astonished group of North American Indians. But the Weinachtsabend and its Christthum of German life are quite different affairs from our English merry Christmas. Here it is essentially a serious though not mournful time, and the "tree" is purely a family or friendly festival; beyond the household none are present, save such few intimates as from one cause or other have no celebration at home. The tree is hidden by doors or curtains from the room where all assemble, children watch in eager expectation the increasing light behind, the elders (if their weakness lies that way), with occasional misgivings of fire, as tiny candles flash from corner to corner. The pause is broken by little voices singing a hymn, the father leading verse by verse, and then the tree is exposed, and in a moment the room is lit up

With a quintessence of flame,  
From thousand tapers flaring bright.

The tree, the happy little fir-tree of Hans Andersen's tale, is decked with candles and baubles and bonbons and tinsel, quaintly-devised gingerbread, wonderful garlands of quince sausages, some superlatively bright ornament being fixed to the topmost shoot; but after all, except for the light it gives, the tree is for the time a secondary consideration. The room it now illuminates is encumbered with presents that have been preparing half the previous year; presents for old and young, for high and low, from mother to father, from father to mother, and even to the stranger that is within the gates. The mother leads the children and servants to the chair or table appropriated to each one's possessions, and there is a confused murmur of "Du liebste Mamma," "die gnädige Frau," with the long drawn-out "wun-der-schön" that German children so delight in. It was into such a gathering as this that Perthes was invited by Jacobi, and went from his books and his philosophical talks with his customers, and he made his silent declaration to his future wife by detaching the gayest painted fruit from the top of the tree, and presenting it to her before all the world.

Her life had been wonderfully placid until she married. Though more than usually cultivated, she and her sisters helped as German ladies did and

do in the housework, believing that a rightly-educated person may be as good or better a pastrycook than a mere drudge, and lose no refinement by skimming preserves. So the young ladies made the cakes in the morning for the guests to eat, while they played the fugues of Bach or the symphonies of Mozart in the evening. But when Caroline Perthes went to Hamburg she came for the first time into direct contact with the world. Her children were born in the first years of this century. In 1801 the Battle of the Baltic was fought. It is said the boom of those guns was heard over the shallow seas and along the sands of Schleswig, further than any sound has been recorded to have been heard; but if it did not reach Hamburg there were rumours enough of war and tumult. "For the battle rages loud and strong, and the stormy tempests blow." Still for the present it was not much nearer to the Hamburg homes than it ever came to our English ones. It had to come closer before it did more than excite horror and pity.

In 1810, Perthes took his family to visit Schwarzburg, his native place. His uncles and their children came up the last hill to meet him, and packing all the little cousins together into the capacious travelling coach, they embraced each other and walked on talking over old times, "till," says the first letter home to Wandsbeck, "they felt twenty years younger for being together again." A few weeks after, Caroline Perthes wrote from Gotha: "While we were in the Thuringian forests we had almost forgotten the French, but here we are reminded of them every day. For months past, splendid cannon from Dantzic and Magdeburg have been dragged through the town on their way to Paris." And to quote M. Monnard, "she was doomed to be both a witness and a victim of the wretchedness arising from a social condition where right made might, and where the sword was the ruling power. A few days before the Christmas of 1810, by a decree of the French Senate published at Hamburg, the Hanse Towns and the North-East of Germany, were incorporated into the French Empire."

The first occupation of Hamburg by the French under Davoust (of whom St. Beuve says, "J'ai ouï dire qu'il n'était pas tendre,") lasted till March, 1813. It was a reign of arbitrary power, when spoliation and extortion were permitted and justice was defied; but it was a period of less suffering than that which followed. Patriotic citizens enrolled themselves into a guard for their own protection, and of course the authorities, or rather those who were in power, suspected their intentions. Perthes and others drilled in secret in their own houses, and his name was first on the list of those to be arrested: houses were searched, the sick and even the insane disturbed in their beds, and the family never lay down to rest without providing means for his escape, and planning, with the help of a relative who was his clerk, how to gain time by delay if the dreaded visit should take place during the night. "In 1813 Moscow was burnt;" French soldiers were needed elsewhere, and till a more stringent conscription had filled the thinned ranks, Hamburg was evacuated. The Hanse Towns formed themselves into a league for their common defence. In such emergencies, as in the earliest periods of society, physical strength

must accompany mental energy, and in this respect unfortunately Von Hess, their commander, was wanting. His health was feeble. It needed the utmost exertions of those who served under him to make up for the deficiency. Foremost among these was Perthes, and whatever were their difficulties, the defence, when Davoust and Vandamme bombarded the town, was so brilliant, that Davoust, infuriated, declared "if he could get into Hamburg for two hours, he would not leave one stone on another, and would strip the inhabitants of everything but their eyes to weep over their misery." Misery it was indeed. St. Just said, "*Ceux qui font les révolutions dans le monde, ceux qui veulent faire le bien, ne doivent dormir que dans le tombeau.*" It was for a higher cause than to effect a revolution that Perthes devoted himself. "For twenty-one nights," writes his wife, "he has not been to bed or changed his clothes. All day I was in fear for his safety, and he could only come in now and then for half-an-hour at a time. Not a man was left in the house, all were under arms, but people were continually coming and going, asking for anything to eat or to drink, for no one that we knew had yet begun to keep house again in the town. In the large room, I had a number of mattresses spread, where many of our weary townsmen might lie down. One of our friends, and many whom we knew, were killed on the ramparts. But the French were daily reinforced, and no town can hold out long unassisted." "Day and night I passed on the balcony," she writes again, "watching to see if my husband or any of my family or friends were among the wounded who were carried to the hospital." At last—and it was only at the very last—the family of Perthes escaped to Wandsheek, which was on Danish ground. This was on the night of the 28th of May: on the 30th the Russians retired, and Hamburg was again at the mercy of the French. In the night Perthes joined his wife and children for a moment, Wandsheek was too near to be safe for one who had been so prominent among the defenders of the city, or even to be sufficiently secure for his family. They must push on to Nutschau, and put themselves under the protection of Count Moltke, and he must go further off still. There was no time to hesitate, or even to prepare; they set out in a country cart, and reached the place before morning. "There were ten of us, and two beds, so I spread cloaks on bundles of linen for the children to lie on;" but even there they could not stay, so active was the search for Perthes, and they went on into what has lately been the scene of the war between Prussia and Denmark, to Eckernförde, where Count Caius Reventlow could give them a little deserted cottage by the sea-side. Perthes had succeeded in carrying off from Hamburg his account-books, and he sat down to examine them resolutely, to see what were his prospects and what were his means. Everything was lost: the house of business and all his property were sequestered; his dwelling-house was stripped of its contents and inhabited by a French general; he had no ready money. Comfort there was none; consolation he might take from the expressions of esteem and confidence he received from one and all of his creditors, and from many eminent men, his friends. How

the fearful ordeal had stirred the depths of the German woman's soul, may be seen in her proud rejoicing that her husband was excluded from the general amnesty that the French proclaimed on re-entering Hamburg. "I am thankful from the bottom of my heart," she writes to her husband, who had taken refuge in Mecklenburg, "that your name is found among those of the enemies of the ruling power. It will be our pride and our happiness as long as we live." Their life at Eckernförde required the consolation of these generous feelings.

"The house consisted of a room and some lofts. Except the farmer who lived hard by, there was not a soul for miles round, and with all his good will, he had literally not the means of giving us more than milk and butter. Bread, salt, soap, and oil, and such things had to be fetched from three miles off, and this was the task of my sister and the two eldest children. For eighteen weeks we saw neither meat nor white bread; the so-called kitchen was outside the house; it was supplied with four copper saucepans and a tin one, a few plates, and that was all. I had saved some spoons; we bought knives and forks; but we were rich in comparison with many of our friends, for at all events we had a hundred times more than nothing." The one room alluded to had in it twelve windows opening down to the ground, and these in a house by the sea-side during a wet summer were anything but wholesome, causing constant illness both to the children and their mother; while, though there was a good-natured horse-doctor at Eckernförde, there was no better advice nearer than Kiel. The Reventlows and Hallbergs were constant in their kindness, but it was a fearful time. Letters from Perthes reached her irregularly, while rumours, exaggerated and confused, of his danger came through others. He dared not expose her to the risk of coming to him—he could not go to her. But the political horizon was clearing, figures came out plainer, too, in the foreground, if the middle distance remained indistinct. On the Christmas evening of 1813 he suddenly appeared in the family circle, but only for a very few days, for on him had devolved the duty of distributing the sums of money sent from all parts to relieve the distress of those who had been driven out of Hamburg. The consequences of war were becoming more keenly felt as its excitement was lessening; posts were irregular and interrupted—he was but a few miles from Hamburg, and could get no news of his wife who was at Kiel. He became alarmed, and succeeded in reaching her. "You are all well?" was his first question—but one little one was lying dead, and the letters to warn him of its illness and tell him of its death were lost. A summons from the Russian head-quarters to a conference about the fugitives from Hamburg interrupted his passionate grief. "In times like these, and for such a purpose, you must obey the call," said his brave wife;—and again he was plunged into the midst of all the misery, poverty, and fever caused by the occupation of the country by foreign troops. An accident followed by an attack of the fever brought him to the verge of the grave, and before he recovered the French were gone. From Blankenese, where he lay recovering, he saw the white flags fly out from the towers and steeples of

the city, but he saw, too, the returning exiles land from the boats at the mouth of the Elbe : groups of worn parents dragging along many children who gathered twigs off the first bushes they came to as if taking possession of their country again ; carriage-loads of little children, whose parents had died in the hospitals at Bremen ; exiles returning from Hanover, "many people and no baggage,"—but they were going back to their homes.

On the 31st of May, 1814, Perthes entered Hamburg with the troops. What a year had passed since he had escaped with his family in May of the previous year !—"a weary and tumultuous space." But he had finished his duty as a soldier, and now he resolved to resume his business, and his place among men of letters. "I can rejoice, I can forgive, I can forget all but my lost child," wrote his wife, "but there are hard times still before us." Before the quiet life could be resumed, before they could "live a year as they were wont to live," there was much to be gone through of mental anxiety, and much of bodily toil. The house was standing, and that was about all that could be said for it ; there was not a corner in it fit to sit down in, the floors were a foot deep in filth, the lower story had been used as a guard-room. A stove being in the middle of the large hall, and the soldiers disinclined to take the trouble of constantly feeding it, had hit on the expedient of pushing trunks of trees through the windows, so that one end reached the fire, and as it was consumed they could shove it further and further in ! We have heard of an indolent Asiatic doing this to save the trouble of chopping wood, but it was new to us as a European practice. Every bit of wood-work had been torn down, every morsel of furniture was gone, and if the want of money precluded any but the most necessary expenditure, the aspect of the greater poverty pressing on all around reduced even this to the lowest possible limit. Still, by the next year they were able to receive Claudius into their house, and to surround his bed with comfort when the old man lay down in his daughter's home to die. It was then he said, "Since my youth I have speculated on these last hours, and I no more understand them now than I did when I was in the fulness of health."

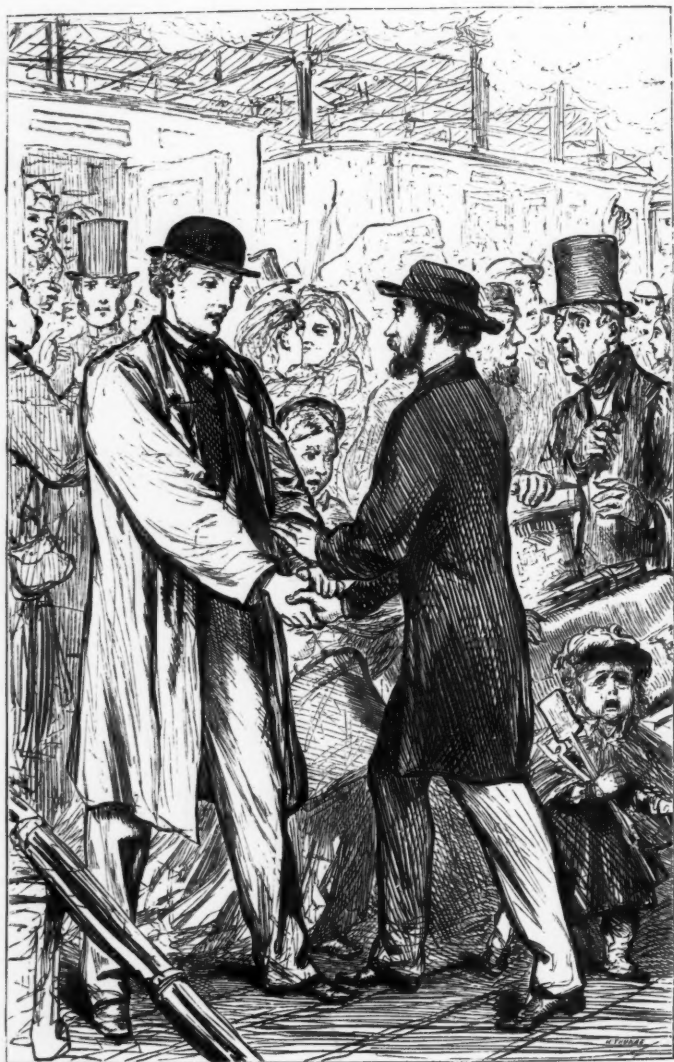
Life in Hamburg ceased to be eventful ; "happy" indeed they could feel was "the nation without a history." The family resumed its quiet round of daily life, though Perthes had often to take what were then long journeys on matters of business—making acquaintance with all the great men who in various parts of Germany had been working for the cause of national freedom. His memoirs, as written by his son, are full of interest, and we cannot but join in his ejaculation, "May God send us many more such men as Frederick Perthes !" To those in England, who believe as many do, that "all Germans are Rationalists," we cannot do better than show them for their enlightenment the conversations of Perthes with Hoffhauer, Protestant and Catholic as they were, or his letters to his wife, and her rejoinders as he was passing from Protestant to Catholic states. For those who think it beneath an intellectual woman's dignity to love her husband and children devotedly, and make no secret of it, there are letters overflowing with tenderness. For those who think

a strong-minded woman must not compromise her consistency by attending to trifles, there is to be seen in Caroline Perthes a woman who trembled only with heart-sickness at the sound of the bombardment of the town she was living in, who could enter earnestly into her husband's political aspirations, and still could write to her married daughter, "Learn, my dear housewife, to find pleasure in your daily life; great events are rare." And she could write with glee of the packing the box of Christmas presents for and from one and all, and recall the Christmas-tree of a quarter of a century before.

The household we have followed from peace to war, and back again to peace, is one of the many thousands that suffered as much, without historians to tell the tale; and now, while we write this, the thought is strong within us that all this may be again, not at some distant and strange time, but instant, almost within the hour. And this time the hosts that will devastate, the cannon that will destroy, the commanders that will direct the ruin, and the women who will weep in victory and in defeat, will all be German. We cannot contemplate this event with the entire self-satisfaction of those public writers who see no solution for the problem but in a paroxysm of national madness, and are continually thankful that they are not even as the Germans. The catastrophe to us is too solemn, and our conviction that the best Germans contemplate their own position with eyes at least as clear as ours, too sincere, for us to rest on this hypothesis. It may be that the very virtues to which we have drawn attention in these pages are not without their share in bringing about this political complication. The "plain living and high thinking" which Wordsworth mourned over as "no more" in England, and which expresses as well as words can do the ideal of German domestic life, may have had the disadvantage of leaving the active direction of great affairs too much in the hands of unscrupulous men, who know how to take advantage of the instincts and aspirations of the people and to use them for selfish and dynastic objects. The intensity of the feeling against the Prussian Minister and his policy on the part of the leading members of the Opposition is no growth of ordinary political difference or social animosity, but it comes from the settled belief that he is provoking civil war without any overpowering necessity of principle or duty. The ultimate objects to which both he and the Prussian nation look may be the same, but the novel lens through which they are seen by him is totally distinct from theirs, and therefore they thoroughly disapprove of his means of attaining them. Such characters as are portrayed in the volume to which we have drawn attention, and which still grace the towns of Northern Germany, though intensely national, and ready for any patriotic sacrifice, have nothing in common with the aggressive, almost filibustering spirit, which pervades certain classes, and which threatens confusion to Europe, and disaster not only to their domestic life and national interests, but, it may be, to the integrity of their nation.

y  
s  
t  
e  
o  
t  
s  
l  
s  
l  
o  
e  
t  
v  
n  
s  
a  
a  
s  
l  
n  
f  
a  
n  
t  
t  
s  
e  
a  
g  
e  
e  
h  
d  
y





ONE TOO MANY

# Irma dale.

## BOOK THE LAST.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE PURPLE FLASK.



**T**HE cab was waiting at the gates as Miss Gwilt approached the Sanatorium. Mr. Bashwood got out and advanced to meet her. She took his arm and led him aside a few steps, out of the cabman's hearing.

"Think what you like of me," she said, keeping her thick black veil down over her face—"but don't speak to me to-night. Drive back to your hotel as if nothing had happened. Meet the tidal train to-morrow as usual; and come to me afterwards at the Sanatorium. Go without a word, and I shall believe there is one man in the world who really loves me. Stay and ask questions, and

I shall bid you good-by at once and for ever!"

She pointed to the cab. In a minute more it had left the Sanatorium and was taking Mr. Bashwood back to his hotel.

She opened the iron gate and walked slowly up to the house door. A shudder ran through her as she rang the bell. She laughed bitterly. "Shivering again!" she said to herself. "Who would have thought I had so much feeling left in me?"

For once in his life the doctor's face told the truth, when the study door opened between ten and eleven at night, and Miss Gwilt entered the room.

"Mercy on me!" he exclaimed, with a look of the blankest bewilderment, "what does this mean?"

"It means," she answered, "that I have decided to-night instead of deciding to-morrow. You, who know women so well, ought to know that

they act on impulse. I am here on an impulse. Take me or leave me, just as you like."

"Take you or leave you?" repeated the doctor, recovering his presence of mind. "My dear lady, what a dreadful way of putting it! Your room shall be got ready instantly! Where is your luggage? Will you let me send for it? No? You can do without your luggage to-night? What admirable fortitude! You will fetch it yourself to-morrow? What extraordinary independence! Do take off your bonnet. Do draw in to the fire! What can I offer you?"

"Offer me the strongest sleeping-draught you ever made in your life," she replied. "And leave me alone till the time comes to take it. I shall be your patient in earnest!" she added fiercely as the doctor attempted to remonstrate. "I shall be the maddest of the mad if you irritate me to-night!"

The Principal of the Sanatorium became gravely and briefly professional in an instant.

"Sit down in that dark corner," he said. "Not a soul shall disturb you. In half an hour you will find your room ready, and your sleeping-draught on the table. It's been a harder struggle for her than I anticipated," he thought, as he left the room, and crossed to his Dispensary on the opposite side of the hall. "Good heavens, what business has *she* with a conscience, after such a life as hers has been!"

The Dispensary was elaborately fitted up with all the latest improvements in medical furniture. But one of the four walls of the room was unoccupied by shelves, and here the vacant space was filled by a handsome antique cabinet of carved wood, curiously out of harmony, as an object, with the unornamented utilitarian aspect of the place generally. On either side of the cabinet two speaking-tubes were inserted in the wall, communicating with the upper regions of the house, and labelled respectively, "Resident Dispenser," and "Head Nurse." Into the second of these tubes the doctor spoke, on entering the room. An elderly woman appeared, took her orders for preparing Mrs. Armadale's bed-chamber, curtsayed, and retired.

Left alone again in the Dispensary, the doctor unlocked the centre compartment of the cabinet, and disclosed a collection of bottles inside, containing the various poisons used in medicine. After taking out the laudanum wanted for the sleeping-draught, and placing it on the dispensary-table, he went back to the cabinet—looked into it for a little while—shook his head doubtfully—and crossed to the open shelves on the opposite side of the room. Here, after more consideration, he took down one out of the row of large chemical bottles before him, filled with a yellow liquid: placing the bottle on the table, he returned to the cabinet, and opened a side compartment, containing some specimens of Bohemian glass-work. After measuring it with his eye, he took from the specimens a handsome purple flask, high and narrow in form, and closed by a glass stopper. This he filled with the yellow liquid, leaving a small quantity

only at the bottom of the bottle, and locking up the flask again in the place from which he had taken it. The bottle was next restored to its place, after having been filled up with water from the cistern in the Dispensary, mixed with certain chemical liquids in small quantities, which restored it (so far as appearances went) to the condition in which it had been when it was first removed from the shelf. Having completed these mysterious proceedings, the doctor laughed softly, and went back to his speaking-tubes to summon the Resident Dispenser next.

The Resident Dispenser made his appearance shrouded in the necessary white apron from his waist to his feet. The doctor solemnly wrote a prescription for a composing draught, and handed it to his assistant.

"Wanted immediately, Benjamin," he said, in a soft and melancholy voice. "A lady-patient—Mrs. Armadale, Room Number-one, Second-floor. Ah, dear, dear!" groaned the doctor absently; "an anxious case, Benjamin—an anxious case." He opened the bran-new ledger of the establishment, and entered the Case at full length, with a brief abstract of the prescription. "Have you done with the laudanum? Put it back, and lock the cabinet, and give me the key. Is the draught ready? Label it 'to be taken at bed-time,' and give it to the nurse, Benjamin—give it to the nurse."

While the doctor's lips were issuing these directions, the doctor's hands were occupied in opening a drawer under the desk on which the ledger was placed. He took out some gaily-printed cards of admission "to view the Sanatorium, between the hours of two and four, P.M.," and filled them up with the date of the next day, "December tenth." When a dozen of the cards had been wrapped up in a dozen lithographed letters of invitation, and enclosed in a dozen envelopes, he next consulted a list of the families resident in the neighbourhood, and directed the envelopes from the list. Ringing a bell this time, instead of speaking through a tube, he summoned the man-servant, and gave him the letters, to be delivered by hand the first thing the next morning. "I think it will do," said the doctor, taking a turn in the Dispensary when the servant had gone out; "I think it will do." While he was still absorbed in his own reflections, the nurse re-appeared to announce that the lady's room was ready; and the doctor thereupon formally returned to the study to communicate the information to Miss Gwilt.

She had not moved since he left her. She rose from her dark corner when he made his announcement, and, without speaking or raising her veil, glided out of the room like a ghost.

After a brief interval, the nurse came downstairs again, with a word for her master's private ear.

"The lady has ordered me to call her to-morrow at seven o'clock, sir," she said. "She means to fetch her luggage herself, and she wants to have a cab at the door as soon as she is dressed. What am I to do?"

"Do what the lady tells you," said the doctor. "She may be safely trusted to return to the Sanatorium."

The breakfast hour at the Sanatorium was half-past eight o'clock. By that time Miss Gwilt had settled everything at her lodging, and had returned with her luggage in her own possession. The doctor was quite amazed at the promptitude of his patient.

"Why waste so much energy?" he asked, when they met at the breakfast-table. "Why be in such a hurry, my dear lady, when you had all the morning before you?"

"Mere restlessness!" she said, briefly. "The longer I live, the more impatient I get."

The doctor, who had noticed before she spoke that her face looked strangely pale and old that morning, observed when she answered him that her expression—naturally mobile in no ordinary degree—remained quite unaltered by the effort of speaking. There was none of the usual animation on her lips, none of the usual temper in her eyes. He had never seen her so impenetrably and coldly composed as he saw her now. "She has made up her mind at last," he thought. "I may say to her this morning, what I couldn't say to her last night."

He prefaced the coming remarks by a warning look at her widow's dress.

"Now you have got your luggage," he began gravely, "permit me to suggest putting that cap away, and wearing another gown."

"Why?"

"Do you remember what you told me, a day or two since?" asked the doctor. "You said there was a chance of Mr. Armadale's dying in my Sanatorium?"

"I will say it again, if you like."

"A more unlikely chance," pursued the doctor, deaf as ever to all awkward interruptions, "it is hardly possible to imagine! But as long as it is a chance at all, it is worth considering. Say then that he dies,—dies suddenly and unexpectedly, and makes a Coroner's Inquest necessary in the house. What is our course in that case? Our course is to preserve the characters to which we have committed ourselves—you as his widow, and I as the witness of your marriage—and, in those characters, to court the fullest inquiry. In the entirely improbable event of his dying just when we want him to die, my idea—I might even say, my resolution—is, to admit that we knew of his resurrection from the sea; and to acknowledge that we instructed Mr. Bashwood to entrap him into this house, by means of a false statement about Miss Milroy. When the inevitable questions follow, I propose to assert that he exhibited symptoms of mental alienation shortly after your marriage—that his delusion consisted in denying that you were his wife, and in declaring that he was engaged to be married to Miss Milroy—that you were in such terror of him on this account, when you heard he was alive and coming back, as to be in a state of nervous agitation that required my care—that at your request, and to calm that nervous agitation, I saw him professionally, and got him quietly into the house by a humouring of his delusion perfectly justifiable in such a case—

and lastly, that I can certify his brain to have been affected by one of those mysterious disorders, eminently incurable, eminently fatal, in relation to which medical science is still in the dark. Such a course as this (in the remotely possible event which we are now supposing) would be, in your interests and mine, unquestionably the right course to take—and such a dress as *that* is, just as certainly, under existing circumstances, the wrong dress to wear.”

“Shall I take it off at once?” she asked, rising from the breakfast-table, without a word of remark on what had just been said to her.

“Any time before two o’clock to-day, will do,” said the doctor.

She looked at him, with a languid curiosity—nothing more. “Why before two?” she inquired.

“Because this is one of my ‘Visitors’ Days.’ And the Visitors’ time is from two to four.”

“What have I to do with your visitors?”

“Simply this. I think it important that perfectly respectable and perfectly disinterested witnesses should see you, in my house, in the character of a lady who has come to consult me.”

“Your motive seems rather far-fetched. Is it the only motive you have in the matter?”

“My dear, dear lady!” remonstrated the doctor; “have I any concealments from *you*? Surely, you ought to know me better than that?”

“Yes,” she said, with a weary contempt. “It’s dull enough of me not to understand you by this time.—Send word upstairs, when I am wanted.” She left him, and went back to her room.

Two o’clock came; and in a quarter of an hour afterwards the Visitors had arrived. Short as the notice had been, cheerless as the Sanatorium looked to spectators from without, the doctor’s invitations had been largely accepted nevertheless by the female members of the families whom he had addressed. In the miserable monotony of the lives led by a large section of the middle classes of England, anything is welcome to the women which offers them any sort of harmless refuge from the established tyranny of the principle that all human happiness begins and ends at home. While the imperious needs of a commercial country limited the representatives of the male sex, among the doctor’s visitors, to one feeble old man and one sleepy little boy, the women, poor souls, to the number of no less than sixteen—old and young, married and single—had seized the golden opportunity of a plunge into public life. Harmoniously united by the two common objects which they all had in view—in the first place, to look at each other, and in the second place, to look at the Sanatorium—they streamed in neatly dressed procession through the doctor’s dreary iron gates, with a thin varnish over them of assumed superiority to all unlady-like excitement, most significant and most pitiable to see!

The proprietor of the Sanatorium received his visitors in the hall with



Miss Gwilt on his arm. The hungry eyes of every woman in the company overlooked the doctor as if no such person had existed; and, fixing on the strange lady, devoured her from head to foot in an instant.

"My First Inmate," said the doctor, presenting Miss Gwilt. "This lady only arrived late last night; and she takes the present opportunity (the only one my morning's engagements have allowed me to give her) of going over the Sanatorium.—Allow me, ma'am," he went on, releasing Miss Gwilt, and giving his arm to the eldest lady among the visitors. "Shattered nerves—domestic anxiety," he whispered confidentially. "Sweet woman! sad case!" He sighed softly, and led the old lady across the hall.

The flock of visitors followed; Miss Gwilt accompanying them in silence, and walking alone—among them, but not of them—the last of all.

"The grounds, ladies and gentlemen," said the doctor, wheeling round and addressing his audience, from the foot of the stairs, "are, as you have seen, in a partially unfinished condition. Under any circumstances, I should lay little stress on the grounds, having Hampstead Heath so near at hand, and carriage-exercise and horse-exercise being parts of my System. In a lesser degree it is also necessary for me to ask your indulgence for the basement floor, on which we now stand. The waiting-room and study on that side, and the Dispensary on the other (to which I shall presently ask your attention), are completed. But the large drawing-room is still in the decorator's hands. In that room (when the walls are dry—not a moment before) my inmates will assemble for cheerful society. Nothing will be spared that can improve, elevate, and adorn life, at these happy little gatherings. Every evening, for example, there will be music for those who like it."

At this point there was a faint stir among the visitors. A mother of a family interrupted the doctor. She begged to know whether music "every evening" included Sunday evening; and, if so, what music was performed?

"Sacred music, of course, ma'am," said the doctor. "Handel on Sunday evening—and Haydn occasionally, when not too cheerful. But, as I was about to say, music is not the only entertainment offered to my nervous inmates. Amusing reading is provided for those who prefer books."

There was another stir among the visitors. Another mother of a family wished to know whether amusing reading meant novels.

"Only such novels as I have selected and perused myself, in the first instance," said the doctor. "Nothing painful, ma'am! There may be plenty that is painful in real life—but, for that very reason, we don't want it in books. The English novelist who enters my house (no foreign novelist will be admitted) must understand his art as the healthy-minded English reader understands it in our time. He must know that our purer modern taste, our higher modern morality, limits him to doing exactly two things for us, when he writes us a book. All we want



of him is—occasionally to make us laugh; and invariably to make us comfortable.”

There was a third stir among the visitors—caused plainly this time, by approval of the sentiments which they had just heard. The doctor, wisely cautious of disturbing the favourable impression that he had produced, dropped the subject of the drawing-room, and led the way upstairs. As before, the company followed—and, as before, Miss Gwilt walked silently behind them, last of all. One after another, the ladies looked at her with the idea of speaking, and saw something in her face, utterly unintelligible to them, which checked the well-meant words on their lips. The prevalent impression was, that the Principal of the Sanatorium had been delicately concealing the truth, and that his first inmate was mad.

The doctor led the way—with intervals of breathing-time accorded to the old lady on his arm—straight to the top of the house. Having collected his visitors in the corridor, and having waved his hand indicatively at the numbered doors opening out of it on either side, he invited the company to look into any or all of the rooms at their own pleasure.

“Numbers one to four, ladies and gentlemen,” said the doctor, “include the dormitories of the attendants. Numbers four to eight are rooms intended for the accommodation of the poorer class of patients whom I receive on terms which simply cover my expenditure—nothing more. In the cases of these poorer persons among my suffering fellow-creatures, personal piety and the recommendation of two clergymen are indispensable to admission. Those are the only conditions I make; but those I insist on. Pray observe that the rooms are all ventilated, and the bedsteads all iron; and kindly notice as we descend again to the second floor, that there is a door shutting off all communication between the second story and the top story, when necessary. The rooms on the second floor, which we have now reached, are (with the exception of my own room) entirely devoted to the reception of lady-inmates—experience having convinced me that the greater sensitiveness of the female constitution necessitates the higher position of the sleeping apartment, with a view to the greater purity and freer circulation of the air. Here the ladies are established immediately under my care, while my assistant-physician (whom I expect to arrive in a week’s time) looks after the gentlemen on the floor beneath. Observe, again, as we descend to this lower, or first floor, a second door, closing all communication at night between the two stories to every one but the assistant-physician and myself. And now that we have reached the gentlemen’s part of the house, and that you have observed for yourselves the regulations of the establishment, permit me to introduce you to a specimen of my system of treatment next. I can exemplify it practically, by introducing you to a room fitted up, under my own directions, for the accommodation of the most complicated cases of nervous suffering and nervous delusion that can come under my care.”

He threw open the door of a room at one extremity of the corridor,

numbered Four. "Look in, ladies and gentlemen," he said; "and, if you see anything remarkable, pray mention it."

The room was not very large, but it was well lit by one broad window. Comfortably furnished as a bedroom, it was only remarkable among other rooms of the same sort, in one way. It had no fireplace. The visitors having noticed this, were informed that the room was warmed in winter by means of hot-water; and were then invited back again into the corridor, to make the discoveries, under professional direction, which they were unable to make for themselves.

"A word, ladies and gentlemen," said the doctor; "literally a word, on nervous derangement first. What is the process of treatment, when, let us say, mental anxiety has broken you down, and you apply to your doctor? He sees you, hears you, and gives you two prescriptions. One is written on paper, and made up at the chemist's. The other is administered by word of mouth, at the propitious moment when the fee is ready; and consists in a general recommendation to you to keep your mind easy. That excellent advice given, your doctor leaves you to spare yourself all earthly annoyances by your own unaided efforts, until he calls again. Here, my System steps in, and helps you! When I see the necessity of keeping your mind easy, I take the bull by the horns and do it for you. I place you in a sphere of action in which the ten thousand trifles which must, and do, irritate nervous people at home, are expressly considered and provided against. I throw up impregnable moral entrenchments between *Worry* and *You*. Find a door banging in *this* house, if you can! Catch a servant in *this* house, rattling the tea-things when he takes away the tray! Discover barking dogs, crowing cocks, hammering workmen, screeching children *here*—and I engage to close My Sanatorium to-morrow! Are these nuisances laughing matters to nervous people? Ask them! Can they escape these nuisances at home? Ask them! Will ten minutes' irritation from a barking dog or a screeching child, undo every atom of good done to a nervous sufferer by a month's medical treatment? There isn't a competent doctor in England who will venture to deny it! On those plain grounds my System is based. I assert the medical treatment of nervous suffering to be entirely subsidiary to the moral treatment of it. That moral treatment of it, you find here. That moral treatment, sedulously pursued throughout the day, follows the sufferer into his room at night; and soothes, helps, and cures him, without his own knowledge—you shall see how."

The doctor paused to take breath; and looked for the first time since the visitors had entered the house, at Miss Gwilt. For the first time, on her side, she stepped forward among the audience, and looked at him in return. After a momentary obstruction in the shape of a cough, the doctor went on.

"Say, ladies and gentlemen," he proceeded, "that my patient has just come in. His mind is one mass of nervous fancies and caprices, which his friends (with the best possible intentions) have been ignorantly irritating at home. They have been afraid of him, for instance, at night.

They have forced him to have somebody to sleep in the room with him, or, they have forbidden him, in case of accidents, to lock his door. He comes to me the first night, and says, 'Mind, I won't have anybody in my room!'—'Certainly not!'—'I insist on locking my door.'—'By all means!' In he goes, and locks his door; and there he is, soothed and quieted, predisposed to confidence, predisposed to sleep, by having his own way. 'This is all very well,' you may say; 'but suppose something happens, suppose he has a fit in the night, what then?' You shall see! 'Hullo, my young friend!' cried the doctor, suddenly addressing the sleepy little boy. 'Let's have a game. You shall be the poor sick man, and I'll be the good doctor. Go into that room, and lock the door. There's a brave boy! Have you locked it? Very good. Do you think I can't get at you if I like? I wait till you're asleep,—I press this little white button, hidden here in the stencilled pattern of the outer wall—the mortice of the lock inside falls back silently against the door-post—and I walk into the room whenever I like. The same plan is pursued with the window. My capricious patient won't open it at night, when he ought. I humour him again. 'Shut it, dear sir, by all means!' As soon as he is asleep, I pull the black handle hidden here, in the corner of the wall. The window of the room inside noiselessly opens, as you see. Say the patient's caprice is the other way—he persists in opening the window when he ought to shut it. Let him! by all means let him! I pull a second handle when he is snug in his bed, and the window noiselessly closes in a moment. Nothing to irritate him, ladies and gentlemen—absolutely nothing to irritate him! But I haven't done with him yet. Epidemic disease, in spite of all my precautions, may enter this Sanatorium, and may render the purifying of the sick-room necessary. Or the patient's case may be complicated by other than nervous malady—say, for instance, asthmatic difficulty of breathing. In the one case, fumigation is necessary: in the other, additional oxygen in the air will give relief. The epidemic nervous patient says, 'I won't be smoked under my own nose!' The asthmatic nervous patient gasps with terror at the idea of a chemical explosion in his room. I noiselessly fumigate one of them; I noiselessly oxygenize the other, by means of a simple Apparatus fixed outside in the corner here. It is protected by this wooden casing; it is locked with my own key; and it communicates by means of a tube with the interior of the room. Look at it!"

With a preliminary glance at Miss Gwilt, the doctor unlocked the lid of the wooden casing, and disclosed inside nothing more remarkable than a large stone jar, having a glass funnel, and a pipe communicating with the wall, inserted in the cork which closed the mouth of it. With another look at Miss Gwilt, the doctor locked the lid again, and asked in the blandest manner, whether his System was intelligible now?

"I might introduce you to all sorts of other contrivances of the same kind," he resumed, leading the way downstairs—"but it would be only the same thing over and over again. A nervous patient who always has

his own way, is a nervous patient who is never worried—and a nervous patient who is never worried, is a nervous patient cured. There it is in a nutshell!—Come and see the Dispensary, ladies; the Dispensary and the kitchen next!”

Once more, Miss Gwilt dropped behind the visitors, and waited alone—looking steadfastly at the Room which the doctor had opened, and at the Apparatus which the doctor had unlocked. Again, without a word passing between them, she had understood him. She knew as well as if he had confessed it, that he was craftily putting the necessary temptation in her way, before witnesses who could speak to the superficially-innocent acts which they had seen, if anything serious happened. The Apparatus, originally constructed to serve the purpose of the doctor's medical crotchets, was evidently to be put to some other use, of which the doctor himself had probably never dreamed till now. And the chances were that before the day was over, that other use would be privately revealed to her at the right moment, in the presence of the right witness. “Armadales will die this time,” she said to herself as she went slowly down the stairs. “The doctor will kill him, by my hands.”

The visitors were in the Dispensary when she joined them. All the ladies were admiring the beauty of the antique cabinet; and, as a necessary consequence, all the ladies were desirous of seeing what was inside. The doctor—after a preliminary look at Miss Gwilt—good-humouredly shook his head. “There is nothing to interest you inside,” he said. “Nothing but rows of little shabby bottles containing the poisons used in medicine which I keep under lock and key. Come to the kitchen, ladies, and honour me with your advice on domestic matters below stairs.” He glanced again at Miss Gwilt as the company crossed the hall, with a look which said plainly, “Wait here.”

In another quarter-of-an-hour, the doctor had expounded his views on cookery and diet, and the visitors (duly furnished with prospectuses) were taking leave of him at the door. “Quite an intellectual treat!” they said to each other, as they streamed out again in neatly-dressed procession through the iron gates. “And what a very superior man!”

The doctor turned back to the Dispensary, humming absently to himself, and failing entirely to observe the corner of the hall in which Miss Gwilt stood retired. After an instant's hesitation, she followed him. The assistant was in the room when she entered it—summoned by his employer the moment before.

“Doctor,” she said, coldly and mechanically, as if she was repeating a lesson; “I am as curious as the other ladies about that pretty cabinet of yours. Now they are all gone, won't you show the inside of it to me?”

The doctor laughed in his pleasantest manner.

“The old story,” he said. “Blue-Beard's locked chamber, and female curiosity! (Don't go, Benjamin, don't go.) My dear lady, what interest can you possibly have in looking at a medical bottle, simply because it happens to be a bottle of poison?”

She repeated her lesson for the second time.

"I have the interest of looking at it," she said, "and of thinking if it got into some people's hands, of the terrible things it might do."

The doctor glanced at his assistant with a compassionate smile.

"Curious, Benjamin," he said; "the romantic view taken of these drugs of ours by the unscientific mind. My dear lady," he added, turning again to Miss Gwilt, "if *that* is the interest you attach to looking at poisons, you needn't ask me to unlock my cabinet—you need only look about you round the shelves of this room. There are all sorts of medical liquids and substances in those bottles—most innocent, most useful in themselves—which, in combination with other substances and other liquids, become poisons as terrible and as deadly as any that I have in my cabinet under lock and key."

She looked at him for a moment, and crossed to the opposite side of the room.

"Show me one," she said.

Still smiling as good-humouredly as ever, the doctor humoured his nervous patient. He pointed to the bottle from which he had privately removed the yellow liquid on the previous day, and which he had filled up again with a carefully-coloured imitation, in the shape of a mixture of his own.

"Do you see that bottle?" he said; "that plump, round, comfortable-looking bottle? Never mind the name of what is inside it; let us stick to the bottle, and distinguish it, if you like, by giving it a name of our own. Suppose we call it 'our Stout Friend?' Very good. Our Stout Friend, by himself, is a most harmless and useful medicine. He is freely dispensed every day to tens of thousands of patients all over the civilized world. He has made no romantic appearances in courts of law; he has excited no breathless interest in novels; he has played no terrifying part on the stage. There he is, an innocent, inoffensive creature, who troubles nobody with the responsibility of locking him up! But bring him into contact with something else—introduce him to the acquaintance of a certain common mineral Substance, of a universally accessible kind, broken into fragments; provide yourself with (say) six doses of our Stout Friend, and pour those doses consecutively on the fragments I have mentioned, at intervals of not less than five minutes. Quantities of little bubbles will rise at every pouring; collect the gas in those bubbles; and convey it into a closed chamber—and let Samson himself be in that closed chamber, our Stout Friend will kill him in half-an-hour! Will kill him slowly, without his seeing anything, without his smelling anything, without his feeling anything but sleepiness. Will kill him, and tell the whole College of Surgeons nothing, if they examine him after death, but that he died of apoplexy or congestion of the lungs! What do you think of *that*, my dear lady, in the way of mystery and romance? Is our harmless Stout Friend as interesting *now* as if he rejoiced in the terrible popular fame of the Arsenic and the Strychnine which I keep locked up there?

Don't suppose I am exaggerating ! Don't suppose I'm inventing a story to put you off with, as the children say. Ask Benjamin, there," said the doctor, appealing to his assistant, with his eyes fixed on Miss Gwilt. "Ask Benjamin," he repeated, with the steadiest emphasis on the next words, "if six doses from that bottle, at intervals of five minutes each, would not, under the conditions I have stated, produce the results I have described ?"

The Resident Dispenser, modestly admiring Miss Gwilt at a distance, started and coloured up. He was plainly gratified by the little attention which had included him in the conversation.

"The doctor is quite right, ma'am," he said, addressing Miss Gwilt, with his best bow, "the production of the gas, extended over half an hour, would be quite gradual enough. And," added the Dispenser, silently appealing to his employer to let him exhibit a little chemical knowledge on his own account, "the volume of the gas would be sufficient at the end of the time—if I am not mistaken, sir ?—to be fatal to any person entering the room, in less than five minutes."

"Unquestionably, Benjamin," rejoined the doctor. "But I think we have had enough of chemistry for the present," he added, turning to Miss Gwilt. "With every desire, my dear lady, to gratify every passing wish you may form, I venture to propose trying a more cheerful subject. Suppose we leave the Dispensary, before it suggests any more inquiries to that active mind of yours? No? You want to see an experiment? You want to see how the little bubbles are made? Well, well ! there is no harm in that. We will let Mrs. Armadale see the bubbles," continued the doctor, in the tone of a parent humouring a spoilt child. "Try if you can find a few of those fragments that we want, Benjamin. I daresay the workmen (slovenly fellows!) have left something of the sort about the house or the grounds."

The Resident Dispenser left the room.

As soon as his back was turned, the doctor began opening and shutting drawers in various parts of the dispensary, with the air of a man who wants something in a hurry, and doesn't know where to find it. "Bless my soul!" he exclaimed, suddenly stopping at the drawer from which he had taken his cards of invitation on the previous day, "what's this? A key? A duplicate key, as I'm alive, of my fumigating Apparatus upstairs! Oh dear, dear, how careless I get," said the doctor, turning round briskly to Miss Gwilt. "I hadn't the least idea that I possessed this second key. I should never have missed it. I do assure you I should never have missed it, if anybody had taken it out of the drawer!" He bustled away to the other end of the room—without closing the drawer, and without taking away the duplicate key.

In silence, Miss Gwilt listened till he had done. In silence, she glided to the drawer. In silence, she took the key and hid it in her apron pocket.

The Dispenser came back, with the fragments required of him, col-



lected in a basin. "Thank you, Benjamin," said the doctor. "Kindly cover them with water, while I get the bottle down."

As accidents sometimes happen in the most perfectly regulated families, so clumsiness sometimes possesses itself of the most perfectly-disciplined hands. In the process of its transfer from the shelf to the doctor, the bottle slipped, and fell smashed to pieces on the floor.

"Oh, my fingers and thumbs!" cried the doctor, with an air of comic vexation, "what in the world do you mean by playing me such a wicked trick as that? Well, well, well—it can't be helped. Have we got any more of it, Benjamin?"

"Not a drop, sir."

"Not a drop!" echoed the doctor. "My dear madam, what excuses can I offer you? My clumsiness has made our little experiment impossible for to-day. Remind me to order some more to-morrow, Benjamin—and don't think of troubling yourself to put that mess to rights. I'll send the man here to mop it all up. Our Stout Friend is harmless enough now, my dear lady—in combination with a boarded floor and a coming mop! I'm so sorry; I really am so sorry to have disappointed you." With those soothing words, he offered his arm, and led Miss Gwilt out of the dispensary.

"Have you done with me for the present?" she asked when they were in the hall.

"Oh dear, dear, what a way of putting it!" exclaimed the doctor. "Dinner at six," he added with his politest emphasis, as she turned from him in disdainful silence, and slowly mounted the stairs to her own room.

A clock of the noiseless sort—incapable of offending irritable nerves—was fixed in the wall, above the first-floor landing, at the Sanatorium. At the moment when the hands pointed to a quarter before six, the silence of the lonely upper regions was softly broken by the rustling of Miss Gwilt's dress. She advanced along the corridor of the first-floor—paused at the covered Apparatus fixed outside the room numbered Four—listened for a moment—and then unlocked the cover with the duplicate key.

The open lid cast a shadow over the inside of the casing. All she saw at first, was what she had seen already—the jar, and the pipe and glass funnel inserted in the cork. She removed the funnel; and, looking about her, observed on the window-sill close by, a wax-tipped wand used for lighting the gas. She took the wand, and, introducing it through the aperture occupied by the funnel, moved it to and fro in the jar. The faint splash of some liquid, and the grating noise of certain hard substances which she was stirring about, were the two sounds that caught her ear. She drew out the wand, and cautiously touched the wet left on it with the tip of her tongue. Caution was quite needless in this case. The liquid was—water.

In putting the funnel back in its place, she noticed something faintly



shining in the obscurely-lit vacant space at the side of the jar. She drew it out, and produced a Purple Flask. The liquid with which it was filled showed dark through the transparent colouring of the glass; and, fastened at regular intervals down one side of the Flask, were six thin strips of paper which divided the contents into six equal parts.

There was no doubt now, that the Apparatus had been secretly prepared for her—the Apparatus of which she alone (besides the doctor) possessed the key.

She put back the Flask, and locked the cover of the casing. For a moment, she stood looking at it, with the key in her hand. On a sudden, her lost colour came back. On a sudden, its natural animation returned, for the first time that day, to her face. She turned and hurried breathlessly upstairs to her room on the second floor. With eager hands, she snatched her cloak out of the wardrobe, and took her bonnet from the box. "I'm not in prison!" she burst out impetuously. "I've got the use of my limbs! I can go—no matter where, as long as I am out of this house!"

With her cloak on her shoulders, with her bonnet in her hand, she crossed the room to the door. A moment more—and she would have been out in the passage. In that moment, the remembrance flashed back on her of the husband whom she had denied to his face. She stopped instantly, and threw the cloak and bonnet from her on the bed. "No!" she said. "The gulph is dug between us—the worst is done!"

There was a knock at the door. The doctor's voice outside, politely reminded her that it was six o'clock.

She opened the door, and stopped him on his way downstairs.

"What time is the train due to-night?" she asked in a whisper.

"At ten," answered the doctor, in a voice which all the world might hear, and welcome.

"What room is Mr. Armadale to have when he comes?"

"What room would you like him to have?"

"Number Four."

The doctor kept up appearances to the very last.

"Number Four let it be," he said graciously. "Provided, of course, that Number Four is unoccupied at the time."

\* \* \* \*

The evening wore on, and the night came.

At a few minutes before ten, Mr. Bashwood was again at his post; once more on the watch for the coming of the tidal train.

The inspector on duty, who knew him by sight, and who had personally ascertained that his regular attendance at the terminus implied no designs on the purses and portmanteaus of the passengers, noticed two new circumstances in connection with Mr. Bashwood that night. In the first place, instead of exhibiting his customary cheerfulness, he looked anxious and depressed. In the second place, while he was watching for the train, he was to all appearance being watched in his turn, by a slim,

dark, undersized man, who had left his luggage (marked with the name of Midwinter,) at the custom-house department the evening before, and who had returned to have it examined about half an hour since.

What had brought Midwinter to the terminus? and why was he, too, waiting for the tidal train?

After straying as far as Hendon during his lonely walk of the previous night, he had taken refuge at the village inn, and had fallen asleep (from sheer exhaustion) towards those later hours of the morning, which were the hours that his wife's foresight had turned to account. When he returned to the lodging, the landlady could only inform him that her tenant had settled everything with her, and had left (for what destination neither she nor her servant could tell) more than two hours since.

Having given some little time to inquiries, the result of which convinced him that the clue was lost so far, Midwinter had quitted the house, and had pursued his way mechanically to the busier and more central parts of the metropolis. With the light now thrown on his wife's character, to call at the address she had given him as the address at which her mother lived would be plainly useless. He went on through the streets, resolute to discover her, and trying vainly to see the means to his end, till the sense of fatigue forced itself on him once more. Stopping to rest and recruit his strength at the first hotel he came to, a chance dispute between the waiter and a stranger about a lost portmanteau reminded him of his own luggage, left at the terminus, and instantly took his mind back to the circumstances under which he and Mr. Bashwood had met. In a moment more, the idea that he had been vainly seeking on his way through the streets flashed on him. In a moment more, he had determined to try the chance of finding the steward again on the watch for the person whose arrival he had evidently expected by the previous evening's train.

Ignorant of the report of Allan's death at sea; uninformed, at the terrible interview with his wife, of the purpose which her assumption of a widow's dress really had in view, Midwinter's first vague suspicions of her fidelity had now inevitably developed into the conviction that she was false. He could place but one interpretation on her open disavowal of him, and on her taking the name under which he had secretly married her. Her conduct forced the conclusion on him that she was engaged in some infamous intrigue; and that she had basely secured herself beforehand in the position of all others in which she knew it would be most odious and most repellent to him to claim his authority over her. With that conviction he was now watching Mr. Bashwood, firmly persuaded that his wife's hiding-place was known to the vile servant of his wife's vices—and darkly suspecting, as the time wore on, that the unknown man who had wronged him, and the unknown traveller for whose arrival the steward was waiting, were one and the same.

The train was late that night, and the carriages were more than usually crowded when they arrived at last. Midwinter became involved

in the confusion on the platform, and in the effort to extricate himself he lost sight of Mr. Bashwood for the first time.

A lapse of some few minutes had passed before he again discovered the steward talking eagerly to a man in a loose shaggy coat, whose back was turned towards him. Forgetful of all the cautions and restraints which he had imposed on himself before the train appeared, Midwinter instantly advanced on them. Mr. Bashwood saw his threatening face as he came on, and fell back in silence. The man in the loose coat turned to look where the steward was looking, and disclosed to Midwinter, in the full light of the station-lamp, Allan's face!

For the moment they both stood speechless, hand in hand, looking at each other. Allan was the first to recover himself.

"Thank God for this!" he said fervently. "I don't ask how you came here—it's enough for me that you have come. Miserable news has met me already, Midwinter. Nobody but you can comfort me, and help me to bear it." His voice faltered over those last words, and he said no more.

The tone in which he had spoken roused Midwinter to meet the circumstances as they were, by appealing to the old grateful interest in his friend which had once been the foremost interest of his life. He mastered his personal misery for the first time since it had fallen on him, and gently taking Allan aside, asked what had happened.

The answer—after informing him of his friend's reported death at sea—announced (on Mr. Bashwood's authority) that the news had reached Miss Milroy, and that the deplorable result of the shock thus inflicted, had obliged the major to place his daughter in the neighbourhood of London, under medical care.

Before saying a word on his side, Midwinter looked distrustfully behind him. Mr. Bashwood had followed them. Mr. Bashwood was watching to see what they did next.

"Was he waiting your arrival here to tell you this about Miss Milroy?" asked Midwinter, looking back again from the steward to Allan.

"Yes," said Allan. "He has been kindly waiting here, night after night, to meet me, and break the news to me."

Midwinter paused once more. The attempt to reconcile the conclusion he had drawn from his wife's conduct with the discovery that Allan was the man for whose arrival Mr. Bashwood had been waiting, was hopeless. The one present chance of discovering a truer solution of the mystery, was to press the steward on the one available point in which he had laid himself open to attack. He had positively denied on the previous evening that he knew anything of Allan's movements, or that he had any interest in Allan's return to England. Having detected Mr. Bashwood in one lie told to himself, Midwinter instantly suspected him of telling another to Allan. He seized the opportunity of sifting the statement about Miss Milroy on the spot.

"How have you become acquainted with this sad news?" he inquired, turning suddenly on Mr. Bashwood.

"Through the major of course," said Allan, before the steward could answer.

"Who is the doctor who has the care of Miss Milroy?" persisted Midwinter, still addressing Mr. Bashwood.

For the second time the steward made no reply. For the second time, Allan answered for him.

"He is a man with a foreign name," said Allan. "He keeps a Sanatorium near Hampstead. What did you say the place was called, Mr. Bashwood?"

"Fairweather Vale, sir," said the steward, answering his employer as a matter of necessity, but answering very unwillingly.

The address of the Sanatorium instantly reminded Midwinter that he had traced his wife to Fairweather Vale Villas the previous night. He began to see light through the darkness, dimly, for the first time. The instinct which comes with emergency, before the slower process of reason can assert itself, brought him at a leap to the conclusion that Mr. Bashwood—who had been certainly acting under his wife's influence the previous day—might be acting again under his wife's influence now. He persisted in sifting the steward's statement, with the conviction growing firmer and firmer in his mind that the statement was a lie, and that his wife was concerned in it.

"Is the major in Norfolk?" he asked, "or is he near his daughter in London?"

"In Norfolk," said Mr. Bashwood. Having answered Allan's look of inquiry, instead of Midwinter's spoken question, in those words, he hesitated, looked Midwinter in the face for the first time, and added, suddenly, "I object, if you please, to be cross-examined, sir. I know what I have told Mr. Armadale, and I know no more."

The words, and the voice in which they were spoken, were alike at variance with Mr. Bashwood's usual language and Mr. Bashwood's usual tone. There was a sullen depression in his face—there was a furtive distrust and dislike in his eyes when they looked at Midwinter, which Midwinter himself now noticed for the first time. Before he could answer the steward's extraordinary outbreak, Allan interfered.

"Don't think me impatient," he said. "But it's getting late; it's a long way to Hampstead. I'm afraid the Sanatorium will be shut up."

Midwinter started. "You are not going to the Sanatorium to-night!" he exclaimed.

Allan took his friend's hand, and wrung it hard. "If you were as fond of her as I am," he whispered, "you would take no rest, you could get no sleep, till you had seen the doctor, and heard the best and the worst he had to tell you. Poor dear little soul! who knows, if she could only see me alive and well——" The tears came into his eyes, and he turned away his head in silence.

Midwinter looked at the steward. "Stand back," he said. "I want to speak to Mr. Armadale." There was something in his eye which it

was not safe to trifle with. Mr. Bashwood drew back out of hearing, but not out of sight. Midwinter laid his hand fondly on his friend's shoulder.

"Allan," he said, "I have reasons——" He stopped. Could the reasons be given before he had fairly realized them himself; at that time, too, and under those circumstances? Impossible! "I have reasons," he resumed, "for advising you not to believe too readily what Mr. Bashwood may say. Don't tell him this, but take the warning."

Allan looked at his friend in astonishment. "It was you who always liked Mr. Bashwood!" he exclaimed. "It was you who trusted him, when he first came to the great house!"

"Perhaps I was wrong, Allan, and perhaps you were right. Will you only wait till we can telegraph to Major Milroy and get his answer? Will you only wait over the night?"

"I shall go mad if I wait over the night," said Allan. "You have made me more anxious than I was before. If I am not to speak about it to Bashwood, I must and will go to the Sanatorium, and find out whether she is or is not there, from the doctor himself."

Midwinter saw that it was useless. In Allan's interests there was only one other course left to take. "Will you let me go with you?" he asked.

"Allan's face brightened for the first time. "You dear, good fellow!" he exclaimed. "It was the very thing I was going to beg of you myself."

Midwinter beckoned to the steward. "Mr. Armadale is going to the Sanatorium," he said, "and I mean to accompany him. Get a cab and come with us."

He waited, to see whether Mr. Bashwood would comply. Having been strictly ordered, when Allan did arrive, not to lose sight of him, and having, in his own interests, Midwinter's unexpected appearance to explain to Miss Gwilt, the steward had no choice but to comply. In sullen submission he did as he had been told. The keys of Allan's baggage were given to the foreign travelling servant whom he had brought with him, and the man was instructed to wait his master's orders at the terminus hotel. In a minute more the cab was on its way out of the station—with Midwinter and Allan inside, and with Mr. Bashwood by the driver on the box.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock that night, Miss Gwilt, standing alone at the window which lit the corridor of the Sanatorium on the second floor, heard the roll of wheels coming towards her. The sound, gathering rapidly in volume through the silence of the lonely neighbourhood, stopped at the iron gates. In another minute she saw the cab draw up beneath her, at the house door.

The earlier night had been cloudy, but the sky was clearing now, and the moon was out. She opened the window to see and hear more clearly. By the light of the moon she saw Allan get out of the cab, and turn round

to speak to some other person inside. The answering voice told her, before he appeared in his turn, that Armadale's companion was her husband.

The same petrifying influence that had fallen on her at the interview with him of the previous day, fell on her now. She stood by the window, white and still, and haggard and old—as she had stood when she first faced him in her widow's weeds.

Mr. Bashwood, stealing up alone to the second floor to make his report, knew, the instant he set eyes on her, that the report was needless. "It's not my fault," was all he said, as she slowly turned her head, and looked at him. "They met together, and there was no parting them."

She drew a long breath, and motioned to him to be silent. "Wait a little," she said; "I know all about it."

Turning from him at those words, she slowly paced the corridor to its furthest end; turned, and slowly came back to him with frowning brow and drooping head—with all the grace and beauty gone from her, but the inbred grace and beauty in the movement of her limbs.

"Do you wish to speak to me?" she asked; her mind far away from him, and her eyes looking at him vacantly as she put the question.

He roused his courage as he had never roused it in her presence yet.

"Don't drive me to despair!" he cried, with a startling abruptness. "Don't look at me in that way, now I have found it out!"

"What have you found out?" she asked, with a momentary surprise in her face, which faded from it again before he could gather breath enough to go on.

"Mr. Armadale is not the man who took you away from me," he answered. "Mr. Midwinter is the man. I found it out in your face yesterday. I see it in your face now. Why did you sign your name, 'Armadale,' when you wrote to me? Why do you call yourself 'Mrs. Armadale' still?"

He spoke those bold words, at long intervals, with an effort to resist her influence over him, pitiable and terrible to see.

She looked at him for the first time with softened eyes. "I wish I had pitied you when we first met," she said gently, "as I pity you now."

He struggled desperately to go on, and say the words to her which he had strung himself to the pitch of saying on the drive from the terminus. They were words which hinted darkly at his knowledge of her past life; words which warned her—do what else she might; commit what crimes she pleased—to think twice before she deceived and deserted him again. In those terms he had vowed to himself to address her. He had the phrases picked and chosen; he had the sentences ranged and ordered in his mind; nothing was wanting but to make the one crowning effort of speaking them—and, even now, after all he had said, and all he had dared, the effort was more than he could compass! In helpless gratitude, even for so little as her pity, he stood looking at her, and wept the silent womanish tears that fall from old men's eyes.



She took his hand and spoke to him—with marked forbearance, but without the slightest sign of emotion on her side.

"You have waited already at my request," she said. "Wait till to-morrow, and you will know all. If you trust nothing else that I have told you, you may trust what I tell you now. *It will end to-night.*"

As she said the words, the doctor's step was heard on the stairs. Mr. Bashwood drew back from her, with his heart beating fast in unutterable expectation. "It will end to-night!" he repeated to himself, under his breath, as he moved away towards the far end of the corridor.

"Don't let me disturb you, sir," said the doctor, cheerfully, as they met. "I have nothing to say to Mrs. Armadale but what you or anybody may hear."

Mr. Bashwood went on, without answering, to the far end of the corridor, still repeating to himself, "It will end to-night!" The doctor passing him in the opposite direction, joined Miss Gwilt.

"You have heard, no doubt," he began in his blandest manner and his roundest tones, "that Mr. Armadale has arrived. Permit me to add, my dear lady, that there is not the least reason for any nervous agitation on your part. He has been carefully humoured, and he is as quiet and manageable as his best friends could wish. I have informed him that it is impossible to allow him an interview with the young lady to-night—but that he may count on seeing her (with the proper precautions) at the earliest propitious hour, after she is awake to-morrow morning. As there is no hotel near, and as the propitious hour may occur at a moment's notice, it was clearly incumbent on me, under the peculiar circumstances, to offer him the hospitality of the Sanatorium. He has accepted it with the utmost gratitude; and has thanked me in a most gentlemanly and touching manner for the pains I have taken to set his mind at ease. Perfectly gratifying, perfectly satisfactory, so far! But there has been a little hitch—now happily got over—which I think it right to mention to you before we all retire for the night."

Having paved the way in those words (and in Mr. Bashwood's hearing) for the statement which he had previously announced his intention of making, in the event of Allan's dying in the Sanatorium, the doctor was about to proceed, when his attention was attracted by a sound below like the trying of a door.

He instantly descended the stairs, and unlocked the door of communication between the first and second floors, which he had locked behind him on his way up. But the person who had tried the door—if such a person there really had been—was too quick for him. He looked along the corridor, and over the staircase into the hall, and discovering nothing, returned to Miss Gwilt, after securing the door of communication behind him once more.

"Pardon me," he resumed, "I thought I heard something downstairs. With regard to the little hitch that I adverted to just now, permit me to inform you that Mr. Armadale has brought a friend here with him, who bears the strange name of Midwinter. Do you know the gentleman at



all?" asked the doctor, with a suspicious anxiety in his eyes, which strangely belied the elaborate indifference of his tone.

"I know him to be an old friend of Mr. Armadale's," she said. "Does he——?" Her voice failed her, and her eyes fell before the doctor's steady scrutiny. She mastered the momentary weakness, and finished her question. "Does he, too, stay here to-night?"

"Mr. Midwinter is a person of coarse manners and suspicious temper," rejoined the doctor, steadily watching her. "He was rude enough to insist on staying here as soon as Mr. Armadale had accepted my invitation."

He paused to note the effect of those words on her. Left utterly in the dark by the caution with which she had avoided mentioning her husband's assumed name to him at their first interview, the doctor's distrust of her was necessarily of the vaguest kind. He had heard her voice fail her—he had seen her colour change. He suspected her of a mental reservation on the subject of Midwinter—and of nothing more.

"Did you permit him to have his way?" she asked. "In your place, I should have shown him the door."

The impenetrable composure of her tone warned the doctor that her self-command was not to be further shaken that night. He resumed the character of Mrs. Armadale's medical referee on the subject of Mr. Armadale's mental health.

"If I had only had my own feelings to consult," he said, "I don't disguise from you that I should (as you say) have shown Mr. Midwinter the door. But on appealing to Mr. Armadale, I found he was himself anxious not to be parted from his friend. Under those circumstances, but one alternative was left, the alternative of humouring him again. The responsibility of thwarting him—to say nothing," added the doctor, drifting for a moment towards the truth, "of my natural apprehension, with such a temper as his friend's, of a scandal and disturbance in the house—was not to be thought of for a moment. Mr. Midwinter accordingly remains here for the night; and occupies (I ought to say, insists on occupying) the next room to Mr. Armadale. Advise me, my dear madam, in this emergency," concluded the doctor, with his loudest emphasis. "What rooms shall we put them in, on the first floor?"

"Put Mr. Armadale in Number Four."

"And his friend next to him, in number three?" said the doctor. "Well! well! well! perhaps they *are* the most comfortable rooms. I'll give my orders immediately. Don't hurry away, Mr. Bashwood," he called out cheerfully as he reached the top of the staircase. "I have left the assistant-physician's key on the window-sill yonder, and Mrs. Armadale can let you out at the staircase door whenever she pleases. Don't sit up late, Mrs. Armadale! Yours is a nervous system that requires plenty of sleep. 'Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep.' Grand line! God bless you—good-night!"

Mr. Bashwood came back from the far end of the corridor—still pondering, in unutterable expectation, on what was to come with the night.

"Am I to go now?" he asked.

"No. You are to stay. I said you should know all if you waited till the morning. Wait here."

He hesitated and looked about him. "The doctor," he faltered.

"I thought the doctor said——"

"The doctor will interfere with nothing that I do in this house to-night. I tell you to stay. There are empty rooms on the floor above this. Take one of them."

Mr. Bashwood felt the trembling fit coming on him again as he looked at her. "May I ask——?" he began.

"Ask nothing. I want you."

"Will you please to tell me——?"

"I will tell you nothing till the night is over and the morning has come."

His curiosity conquered his fear. He persisted.

"Is it something dreadful?" he whispered. "Too dreadful to tell me?"

She stamped her foot with a sudden outbreak of impatience. "Go!" she said, snatching the key of the staircase door from the window-sill. "You do quite right to distrust me—you do quite right to follow me no farther in the dark. Go before the house is shut up. I can do without you." She led the way to the stairs, with the key in one hand, and the candle in the other.

Mr. Bashwood followed her in silence. No one, knowing what he knew of her earlier life, could have failed to perceive that she was a woman driven to the last extremity, and standing consciously on the brink of a Crime. In the first terror of the discovery, he broke free from the hold she had on him—he thought and acted like a man who had a will of his own again.

She put the key in the door, and turned to him before she opened it, with the light of the candle on her face. "Forget me, and forgive me," she said. "We meet no more."

She opened the door, and, standing inside it, after he had passed her, gave him her hand. He had resisted her look, he had resisted her words, but the magnetic fascination of her touch conquered him at the final moment. "I can't leave you!" he said, holding helplessly by the hand she had given him. "What must I do?"

"Come and see," she answered, without allowing him an instant to reflect.

Closing her hand firmly on his, she led him along the first-floor corridor to the room numbered Four. "Notice that room," she whispered. After a look over the stairs to see that they were alone, she retraced her steps with him to the opposite extremity of the corridor. Here, facing the window which lit the place at the other end, was one little room, with a narrow grating in the higher part of the door, intended for the sleeping-apartment of the doctor's deputy. From the position of this room, the grating commanded a view of the bed-chambers down each side of the

corridor, and so enabled the deputy-physician to inform himself of any irregular proceedings on the part of the patients under his care, with little or no chance of being detected in watching them. Miss Gwilt opened the door and led the way into the empty room.

"Wait here," she said, "while I go back upstairs; and lock yourself in, if you like. You will be in the dark—but the gas will be burning in the corridor. Keep at the grating, and make sure that Mr. Armadale goes into the room I have just pointed out to you, and that he doesn't leave it afterwards. If you lose sight of the room for a single moment, before I come back, you will repent it to the end of your life. If you do as I tell you, you shall see me to-morrow, and claim your own reward. Quick with your answer! Is it Yes or No?"

He could make no reply in words. He raised her hand to his lips, and kissed it rapturously. She left him in the room. From his place at the grating he saw her glide down the corridor to the staircase door. She passed through it, and locked it. Then there was silence.

The next sound was the sound of the women-servants' voices. Two of them came up to put the sheets on the beds in Number Three and Number Four. The women were in high good-humour, laughing and talking to each other through the open doors of the rooms. The master's customers were coming in at last, they said, with a vengeance; the house would soon begin to look cheerful, if things went on like this.

After a little, the beds were got ready, and the women returned to the kitchen-floor, on which the sleeping rooms of the domestic servants were all situated. Then there was silence again.

The next sound was the sound of the doctor's voice. He appeared at the end of the corridor, showing Allan and Midwinter the way to their rooms. They all went together into Number Four. After a little, the doctor came out first. He waited till Midwinter joined him, and pointed with a formal bow to the door of Number Three. Midwinter entered the room without speaking, and shut himself in. The doctor, left alone, withdrew to the staircase door and unlocked it—then waited in the corridor, whistling to himself softly, under his breath.

Voices pitched cautiously low became audible in a minute more in the hall. The Resident Dispenser and the Head Nurse appeared, on their way to the Dormitories of the Attendants at the top of the house. The man bowed silently, and passed the doctor; the woman curtseyed silently, and followed the man. The doctor acknowledged their salutations by a courteous wave of his hand; and once more left alone, paused a moment, still whistling softly to himself—then walked to the door of Number Four, and opened the case of the fumigating apparatus fixed near it in the corner of the wall. As he lifted the lid and looked in, his whistling ceased. He took a long purple bottle out, examined it by the gaslight, put it back, and closed the case. This done, he advanced on tiptoe to the open staircase door—passed through it—and secured it on the inner side as usual.

Mr. Bashwood had seen him at the apparatus; Mr. Bashwood had

noticed the manner of his withdrawal through the staircase-door. Again the sense of an unutterable expectation throbbed at his heart. A terror that was slow and cold and deadly crept into his hands, and guided them in the dark to the key that had been left for him in the inner side of the door. He turned it in vague distrust of what might happen next, and waited.

The slow minutes passed, and nothing happened. The silence was horrible; the solitude of the lonely corridor was a solitude of invisible treacheries. He began to count to keep his mind employed—to keep his own growing dread away from him. The numbers, as he whispered them, followed each other slowly up to a hundred, and still nothing happened. He had begun the second hundred; he had got on to twenty—when, without a sound to betray that he had been moving in his room, Midwinter suddenly appeared in the corridor.

He stood for a moment and listened—he went to the stairs and looked over into the hall beneath. Then, for the second time that night, he tried the staircase door, and for the second time found it fast. After a moment's reflection, he tried the doors of the bedrooms on his right hand next, looked into one after the other, and saw that they were empty, then came to the door of the end room in which the steward was concealed. Here again, the lock resisted him. He listened, and looked up at the grating. No sound was to be heard, no light was to be seen inside. "Shall I break the door in," he said to himself, "and make sure? No; it would be giving the doctor an excuse for turning me out of the house." He moved away, and looked into the two empty rooms in the row occupied by Allan and himself, then walked to the window at the staircase end of the corridor. Here, the case of the fumigating apparatus attracted his attention. After trying vainly to open it, his suspicion seemed to be aroused. He searched back along the corridor, and observed that no object of a similar kind appeared outside any of the other bedchambers. Again at the window, he looked again at the apparatus, and turned away from it with a gesture which plainly indicated that he had tried, and failed, to guess what it might be.

Baffled at all points, he still showed no sign of returning to his bed-chamber. He stood at the window, with his eyes fixed on the door of Allan's room, thinking. If Mr. Bashwood, furtively watching him through the grating, could have seen him at that moment in the mind as well as in the body, Mr. Bashwood's heart might have throbbed even faster than it was throbbing now, in expectation of the next event which Midwinter's decision of the next minute was to bring forth.

On what was his mind occupied as he stood alone, at the dead of night, in the strange house?

His mind was occupied in drawing its disconnected impressions together, little by little, to one point. Convinced, from the first, that some hidden danger threatened Allan in the Sanatorium, his distrust—vaguely associated, thus far, with the place itself; with his wife (whom he firmly believed to be now under the same roof with him); with the doctor, who

was as plainly in her confidence as Mr. Bashwood himself—now narrowed its range, and centred itself obstinately in Allan's room. Resigning all further effort to connect his suspicion of a conspiracy against his friend, with the outrage which had the day before been offered to himself—an effort which would have led him, if he could have maintained it, to a discovery of the Fraud really contemplated by his wife—his mind, clouded and confused by disturbing influences, instinctively took refuge in its impressions of facts as they had shown themselves, since he had entered the house. Everything that he had noticed below stairs suggested that there was some secret purpose to be answered by getting Allan to sleep in the Sanatorium. Everything that he had noticed above stairs, associated the lurking-place in which the danger lay hid, with Allan's room. To reach this conclusion, and to decide on baffling the conspiracy, whatever it might be, by taking Allan's place, was with Midwinter the work of an instant. Confronted by actual peril, the great nature of the man intuitively freed itself from the weaknesses that had beset it in happier and safer times. Not even the shadow of the old superstition rested on his mind now—no fatalist suspicion of himself disturbed the steady resolution that was in him. The one last doubt that troubled him, as he stood at the window thinking, was the doubt whether he could persuade Allan to change rooms with him, without involving himself in an explanation which might lead Allan to suspect the truth.

In the minute that elapsed, while he waited with his eyes on the room, the doubt was resolved—he found the trivial, yet sufficient, excuse of which he was in search. Mr. Bashwood saw him rouse himself, and go to the door. Mr. Bashwood heard him knock softly, and whisper, "Allan, are you in bed?"

"No," answered the voice inside, "come in."

He appeared to be on the point of entering the room, when he checked himself as if he had suddenly remembered something. "Wait a minute," he said, through the door, and, turning away, went straight to the end room. "If there is anybody watching us in there," he said aloud, "let him watch us through this!" He took out his handkerchief, and stuffed it into the wires of the grating, so as completely to close the aperture. Having thus forced the spy inside (if there was one) either to betray himself by moving the handkerchief, or to remain blinded to all view of what might happen next, Midwinter presented himself in Allan's room.

"You know what poor nerves I have," he said, "and what a wretched sleeper I am at the best of times. I can't sleep to-night. The window in my room rattles every time the wind blows. I wish it was as fast as your window here."

"My dear fellow!" cried Allan, "I don't mind a rattling window. Let's change rooms. Nonsense! Why should you make excuses to *me*? Don't I know how easily trifles upset those excitable nerves of yours? Now the doctor has quieted my mind about my poor little Neelie, I begin to feel the journey—and I'll answer for sleeping anywhere till to-morrow

comes." He took up his travelling-bag. "We must be quick about it," he added, pointing to his candle. "They haven't left me much candle to go to bed by."

"Be very quiet, Allan," said Midwinter, opening the door for him. "We mustn't disturb the house at this time of night."

"Yes, yes," returned Allan, in a whisper. "Good night—I hope you'll sleep as well as I shall."

Midwinter saw him into Number Three, and noticed that his own candle (which he had left there) was as short as Allan's. "Good night," he said, and came out again into the corridor.

He went straight to the grating, and looked and listened once more. The handkerchief remained exactly as he had left it, and still there was no sound to be heard within. He returned slowly along the corridor, and thought of the precautions he had taken, for the last time. Was there no other way than the way he was trying now? There was none. Any openly-avowed posture of defence—while the nature of the danger, and the quarter from which it might come, were alike unknown—would be useless in itself, and worse than useless in the consequences which it might produce by putting the people of the house on their guard. Without a fact that could justify to other minds his distrust of what might happen with the night; incapable of shaking Allan's ready faith in the fair outside which the doctor had presented to him, the one safeguard in his friend's interests that Midwinter could set up, was the safeguard of changing the rooms—the one policy he could follow, come what might of it, was the policy of waiting for events. "I can trust to one thing," he said to himself, as he looked for the last time up and down the corridor—"I can trust myself to keep awake."

After a glance at the clock on the wall opposite, he went into Number Four. The sound of the closing door was heard, the sound of the turning lock followed it. Then, the dead silence fell over the house once more.

Little by little, the steward's horror of the stillness and the darkness overcame his dread of moving the handkerchief. He cautiously drew aside one corner of it—waited—looked—and took courage at last to draw the whole handkerchief through the wires of the grating. After first hiding it in his pocket, he thought of the consequences if it was found on him, and threw it down in a corner of the room. He trembled when he had cast it from him, as he looked at his watch, and placed himself again at the grating to wait for Miss Gwilt.

It was a quarter to one. The moon had come round from the side to the front of the Sanatorium. From time to time her light gleamed on the window of the corridor, when the gaps in the flying clouds let it through. The wind had risen, and sung its mournful song faintly, as it swept at intervals over the desert ground in front of the house.

The minute-hand of the clock travelled on half-way round the circle of the dial. As it touched the quarter-past one, Miss Gwilt stepped noiselessly into the corridor. "Let yourself out," she whispered through the



grating, "and follow me." She returned to the stairs by which she had just descended; pushed the door to softly, after Mr. Bashwood had followed her; and led the way up to the landing of the second-floor. There she put the question to him which she had not ventured to put below stairs."

"Was Mr. Armadale shown into Number Four?" she asked.

He bowed his head without speaking.

"Answer me in words. Has Mr. Armadale left the room since?"

He answered, "No."

"Have you never lost sight of Number Four since I left you?"

He answered, "*Never*."

Something strange in his manner, something unfamiliar in his voice, as he made that last reply, attracted her attention. She took her candle from a table near, on which she had left it, and threw its light on him. His eyes were staring, his teeth chattered. There was everything to betray him to her as a terrified man—there was nothing to tell her that the terror was caused by his consciousness of deceiving her, for the first time in his life, to her face. If she had threatened him less openly when she placed him on the watch; if she had spoken less unreservedly of the interview which was to reward him in the morning, he might have owned the truth. As it was, his strongest fears and his dearest hopes were alike interested in telling her the fatal lie that he had now told—the fatal lie which he reiterated when she put her question for the second time.

She looked at him, deceived by the last man on earth whom she would have suspected of deception—the man whom she had deceived herself.

"You seem to be over-excited," she said quietly. "The night has been too much for you. Go upstairs, and rest. You will find the door of one of the rooms left open. That is the room you are to occupy. Good night."

She put the candle (which she had left burning for him) on the table, and gave him her hand. He held her back by it desperately as she turned to leave him. His horror of what might happen when she was left by herself, forced the words to his lips which he would have feared to speak to her at any other time.

"Don't," he pleaded in a whisper; "oh, don't, don't, don't go down-stairs to-night!"

She released her hand, and signed to him to take the candle. "You shall see me to-morrow," she said. "Not a word more now!"

Her stronger will conquered him at that last moment, as it had conquered him throughout. He took the candle, and waited—following her eagerly with his eyes as she descended the stairs. The cold of the December night seemed to have found its way to her through the warmth of the house. She had put on a long heavy black shawl, and had fastened it close over her breast. The plaited coronet in which she wore her hair seemed to have weighed too heavily on her head. She had untwisted it, and thrown it back over her shoulders. The old man looked at her



flowing hair, as it lay red over the black shawl—at her supple, long-fingered hand, as it slid down the banisters—at the smooth, seductive grace of every movement that took her farther and farther away from him. “The night will go quickly,” he said to himself as she passed from his view; “I shall dream of her till the morning comes!”

She secured the staircase door, after she had passed through it—listened, and satisfied herself that nothing was stirring—then went on slowly along the corridor to the window. Leaning on the window-sill, she looked out at the night. The clouds were over the moon at that moment; nothing was to be seen through the darkness but the scattered gaslights in the suburb. Turning from the window, she looked at the clock. It was twenty minutes past one.

For the last time, the resolution that had come to her in the earlier night, with the knowledge that her husband was in the house, forced itself uppermost in her mind. For the last time, the voice within her said, “Think if there is no other way!”

She pondered over it till the minute-hand of the clock pointed to the half-hour. “No!” she said, still thinking of her husband. “The one chance left, is to go through with it to the end. He will leave the thing undone which he has come here to do; he will leave the words unspeken which he has come here to say—when he knows that the act may make me a public scandal, and that the words may send me to the scaffold!” Her colour rose, and she smiled with a terrible irony as she looked for the first time at the door of the Room. “I shall be your widow,” she said, “in half-an-hour!”

She opened the case of the apparatus, and took the Purple Flask in her hand. After marking the time by a glance at the clock, she dropped into the glass funnel the first of the six separate Pourings that were measured for her by the paper slips.

When she had put the Flask back, she listened at the mouth of the funnel. Not a sound reached her ear: the deadly process did its work, in the silence of death itself. When she rose, and looked up, the moon was shining in at the window, and the moaning wind was quiet.

Oh, the time! the time! If it could only have been begun and ended with the first Pouring!

She went downstairs into the hall—she walked to and fro, and listened at the open door that led to the kitchen stairs. She came up again; she went down again. The first of the intervals of five minutes was endless. The time stood still. The suspense was maddening.

The interval passed. As she took the Flask for the second time, and dropped in the second Pouring, the clouds floated over the moon, and the night-view through the window slowly darkened.

The restlessness that had driven her up and down the stairs, and backwards and forwards in the hall, left her as suddenly as it had come. She waited through the second interval, leaning on the window-sill, and

staring, without conscious thought of any kind, into the black night. The howling of a belated dog was borne towards her on the wind, at intervals, from some distant part of the suburb. She found herself following the faint sound as it died away into silence with a dull attention, and listening for its coming again with an expectation that was duller still. Her arms lay like lead on the window-sill; her forehead rested against the glass without feeling the cold. It was not till the moon struggled out again that she was startled into sudden self-remembrance. She turned quickly, and looked at the clock; seven minutes had passed since the second Pouring.

As she snatched up the Flask, and fed the funnel for the third time, the full consciousness of her position came back to her. The fever-heat throbbed again in her blood, and flushed fiercely in her cheeks. Swift, smooth, and noiseless, she paced from end to end of the corridor, with her arms folded in her shawl, and her eye moment after moment on the clock.

Three out of the next five minutes passed, and again the suspense began to madden her. The space in the corridor grew too confined for the illimitable restlessness that possessed her limbs. She went down into the hall again, and circled round and round it like a wild creature in a cage. At the third turn, she felt something moving softly against her dress. The house-cat had come up through the open kitchen-door—a large, tawny, companionable cat that purred in high good temper, and followed her for company. She took the animal up in her arms—it rubbed its sleek head luxuriously against her chin as she bent her face over it. “Armadales hates cats,” she whispered in the creature’s ear. “Come up and see Armadales killed!” The next moment her own frightful fancy horrified her. She dropped the cat with a shudder; she drove it below again with threatening hands. For a moment after, she stood still—then, in headlong haste, suddenly mounted the stairs. Her husband had forced his way back again into her thoughts; her husband threatened her with a danger which had never entered her mind till now. What, if he were not asleep? What if he came out upon her, and found her with the Purple Flask in her hand?

She stole to the door of number three, and listened. The slow, regular breathing of a sleeping man was just audible. After waiting a moment to let the feeling of relief quiet her, she took a step towards Number Four—and checked herself. It was needless to listen at *that* door. The doctor had told her that Sleep came first, as certainly as Death afterwards, in the poisoned air. She looked aside at the clock. The time had come for the fourth Pouring.

Her hand began to tremble violently, as she fed the funnel for the fourth time. The fear of her husband was back again in her heart. What if some noise disturbed him before the sixth Pouring? What if he woke on a sudden (as she had often seen him wake) without any noise at all?

She looked up and down the corridor. The end room, in which Mr. Bashwood had been concealed, offered itself to her as a place of refuge.

"I might go in there!" she thought. "Has he left the key?" She opened the door to look, and saw the handkerchief thrown down on the floor. Was it Mr. Bashwood's handkerchief, left there by accident? She examined it at the corners. In the second corner she found her husband's name!

Her first impulse hurried her to the staircase-door, to rouse the steward, and insist on an explanation. The next moment, she remembered the Purple Flask, and the danger of leaving the corridor. She turned, and looked at the door of number three. Her husband, on the evidence of the handkerchief, had unquestionably been out of his room—and Mr. Bashwood had not told her. Was he in his room now? In the violence of her agitation, as the question passed through her mind, she forgot the discovery which she had herself made not a minute before. Again, she listened at the door; again, she heard the slow regular breathing of the sleeping man. The first time, the evidence of her ears had been enough to quiet her. *This* time, in the tenfold aggravation of her suspicion and her alarm, she was determined to have the evidence of her eyes as well. "All the doors open softly in this house," she said to herself; "there's no fear of my waking him." Noiselessly, by an inch at a time, she opened the unlocked door, and looked in the moment the aperture was wide enough. In the little light she had let into the room, the sleeper's head was just visible on the pillow. Was it quite as dark against the white pillow as her husband's head looked when he was in bed? Was the breathing as light as her husband's breathing when he was asleep?

She opened the door more widely, and looked in by the clearer light.

There lay the man whose life she had attempted for the third time, peacefully sleeping in the room that had been given to her husband, and in the air that could harm nobody!

The inevitable conclusion overwhelmed her on the instant. With a frantic upward action of her hands she staggered back into the passage. The door of Allan's room fell to—but not noisily enough to wake him. She turned as she heard it close. For one moment she stood staring at it like a woman stupefied. The next, her instinct rushed into action, before her reason recovered itself. In two steps she was at the door of Number Four.

The door was locked.

She felt over the wall with both hands, wildly and clumsily, for the button which she had seen the doctor press, when he was showing the room to the visitors. Twice she missed it. The third time her eyes helped her hands—she found the button and pressed on it. The mortice of the lock inside fell back, and the door yielded to her.

Without an instant's hesitation she entered the room. Though the door was open—though so short a time had elapsed since the fourth Pouring, that but little more than half the contemplated volume of gas had been produced as yet—the poisoned air seized her, like the grasp of a hand at her throat, like the twisting of a wire round her head. She found him on the floor at the foot of the bed—his head and one arm were towards the door, as if he had risen under the first feeling of drowsiness, and

had sunk in the effort to leave the room. With the desperate concentration of strength of which women are capable in emergencies, she lifted him and dragged him out into the corridor. Her brain reeled as she laid him down and crawled back on her knees to the room, to shut out the poisoned air from pursuing them into the passage. After closing the door, she waited, without daring to look at him the while, for strength enough to rise and get to the window over the stairs. When the window was opened, when the keen air of the early winter morning blew steadily in, she ventured back to him and raised his head, and looked for the first time closely at his face.

Was it death that spread the livid pallor over his forehead and his cheeks, and the dull leaden hue on his eyelids and his lips?

She loosened his cravat and opened his waistcoat, and bared his throat and breast to the air. With her hand on his heart, with her bosom supporting his head, so that he fronted the window, she waited the event. A time passed: a time short enough to be reckoned by minutes on the clock; and yet long enough to take her memory back over all her married life with him—long enough to mature the resolution that now rose in her mind as the one result that could come of the retrospect. As her eyes rested on him, a strange composure settled slowly on her face. She bore the look of a woman who was equally resigned to welcome the chance of his recovery, or to accept the certainty of his death.

Not a cry or a tear had escaped her yet. Not a cry or a tear escaped her when the interval had passed, and she felt the first faint fluttering of his heart, and heard the first faint catching of the breath at his lips. She silently bent over him and kissed his forehead. When she looked up again, the hard despair had melted from her face. There was something softly radiant in her eyes, which lit her whole countenance as with an inner light, and made her womanly and lovely once more.

She laid him down, and, taking off her shawl, made a pillow of it to support his head. "It might have been hard, love," she said, as she felt the faint pulsation strengthening at his heart. "You have made it easy now."

She rose, and, turning from him, noticed the Purple Flask in the place where she had left it since the fourth Pouring. "Ah," she thought quietly, "I had forgotten my best friend—I had forgotten that there is more to pour in yet."

With a steady hand, with a calm, attentive face, she fed the funnel for the fifth time. "Five minutes more," she said, when she had put the Flask back, after a look at the clock.

She fell into thought—thought that only deepened the grave and gentle composure of her face. "Shall I write him a farewell word?" she asked herself. "Shall I tell him the truth before I leave him for ever?"

Her little gold pencil-case hung with the other toys at her watch-chain. After looking about her for a moment, she knelt over her husband, and put her hand into the breast-pocket of his coat.

His pocket-book was there. Some papers fell from it as she unfas-

tened the clasp. One of them was the letter which had come to him from Mr. Brock's deathbed. She turned over the two sheets of note-paper on which the rector had written the words that had now come true—and found the last page of the last sheet a blank. On that page she wrote her farewell words, kneeling at her husband's side.

"I am worse than the worst you can think of me. You have saved Armadale by changing rooms with him to-night—and you have saved him from Me. You can guess now whose widow I should have claimed to be, if you had not preserved his life; and you will know what a wretch you married when you married the woman who writes these lines. Still, I had some innocent moments—and then I loved you dearly. Forget me, my darling, in the love of a better woman than I am. I might, perhaps, have been that better woman myself, if I had not lived a miserable life before you met with me. It matters little now. The one atonement I can make for all the wrong I have done you is the atonement of my death. It is not hard for me to die, now I know you will live. Even my wickedness has one merit—it has not prospered. I have never been a happy woman."

She folded the letter again, and put it into his hand, to attract his attention in that way when he came to himself. As she gently closed his fingers on the paper and looked up, the last minute of the last interval faced her, recorded on the clock.

She bent over him, and gave him her farewell kiss.

"Live, my angel, live!" she murmured tenderly, with her lips just touching his. "All your life is before you—a happy life, and an honoured life, if you are freed from *me*!"

With a last, lingering tenderness, she parted the hair back from his forehead. "It is no merit to have loved you," she said. "You are one of the men whom women all like." She sighed and left him. It was her last weakness. She bent her head affirmatively to the clock, as if it had been a living creature speaking to her—and fed the funnel for the last time, to the last drop left in the Flask.

The waning moon shone in faintly at the window. With her hand on the door of the room, she turned, and looked at the light that was slowly fading out of the murky sky.

"Oh, God, forgive me!" she said. "Oh, Christ, bear witness that I have suffered!"

One moment more she lingered on the threshold; lingered for her last look in this world—and turned that look on *him*.

"Good-by!" she said softly.

The door of the room opened—and closed on her. There was an interval of silence.

Then, a sound came dull and sudden, like the sound of a fall.

Then, there was silence again.

\* \* \* \* \*

The hands of the clock, following their steady course, reckoned the minutes of the morning as one by one they lapsed away. It was the

tenth minute since the door of the room had opened and closed, before Midwinter stirred on his pillow, and, struggling to raise himself, felt the letter in his hand.

At the same moment, a key was turned in the staircase-door. And the doctor, looking expectantly towards the fatal room, saw the Purple Flask on the window-sill, and the prostrate man trying to raise himself from the floor.

THE END OF THE LAST BOOK.

## EPILOGUE.

### CHAPTER I.

#### NEWS FROM NORFOLK.

*From Mr. Pedgift Senior (Thorpe-Ambrose), to Mr. Pedgift Junior (Paris).*

"MY DEAR AUGUSTUS,

"High Street, December 20th.

"YOUR letter reached me yesterday. You seem to be making the most of your youth (as you call it) with a vengeance. Well! enjoy your holiday. I made the most of my youth, when I was your age; and, wonderful to relate, I haven't forgotten it yet!

"You ask me for a good budget of news, and especially, for more information about that mysterious business at the Sanatorium.

"Curiosity, my dear boy, is a quality, which (in our profession especially) sometimes leads to great results. I doubt, however, if you will find it leading to much on this occasion. All I know of the mystery at the Sanatorium, I know from Mr. Armadale; and he is entirely in the dark on more than one point of importance. I have already told you how they were entrapped into the house, and how they passed the night there. To this I can now add that something did certainly happen to Mr. Midwinter, which deprived him of consciousness; and that the doctor, who appears to have been mixed up in the matter, carried things with a high hand, and insisted on taking his own course in his own Sanatorium. There is not the least doubt that the miserable woman (however she might have come by her death) was found dead—that a coroner's inquest inquired into the circumstances—that the evidence showed her to have entered the house as a patient—and that the medical investigation ended in discovering that she had died of apoplexy. My idea is, that Mr. Midwinter had a motive of his own for not coming forward with the evidence that he might have given. I have also reason to suspect that Mr. Armadale, out of regard for him, followed his lead, and that the verdict at the inquest (attach-



ing no blame to anybody), proceeded, like many other verdicts of the same kind, from an entirely superficial investigation of the circumstances.

The key to the whole mystery is to be found, I firmly believe, in that wretched woman's attempt to personate the character of Mr. Armadale's widow, when the news of his death appeared in the papers. But what first set her on this, and by what inconceivable process of deception, she can have induced Mr. Midwinter to marry her (as the certificate proves), under Mr. Armadale's name, is more than Mr. Armadale himself knows. The point was not touched at the inquest, for the simple reason that the inquest only concerned itself with the circumstances attending her death. Mr. Armadale, at his friend's request, saw Miss Blanchard, and induced her to silence old Darch on the subject of the claim that had been made relating to the widow's income. As the claim had never been admitted, even our stiff-necked brother practitioner consented for once to do as he was asked. The doctor's statement that his patient was the widow of a gentleman named Armadale, was accordingly left unchallenged, and so the matter has been hushed up. She is buried in the great cemetery, near the place where she died. Nobody but Mr. Midwinter and Mr. Armadale (who insisted on going with him), followed her to the grave; and nothing has been inscribed on the tombstone, but the initial letter of her Christian name, and the date of her death. So, after all the harm she has done, she rests at last—and so the two men whom she has injured have forgiven her.

"Is there more to say on this subject before we leave it? On referring to your letter, I find you have raised one other point, which may be worth a moment's notice.

"You ask if there is reason to suppose that the doctor comes out of the matter with hands which are really as clean as they look? My dear Augustus, I believe the doctor to have been at the bottom of more of this mischief than we shall ever find out; and to have profited by the self-imposed silence of Mr. Midwinter and Mr. Armadale, as rogues perpetually profit by the misfortunes and necessities of honest men. It is an ascertained fact that he connived at the false statement about Miss Milroy, which entrapped the two gentlemen into his house,—and that one circumstance (after my Old Bailey experience) is enough for *me*. As to evidence against him, there is not a jot,—and as to Retribution overtaking him, I can only say I heartily hope Retribution may prove in the long run to be the more cunning customer of the two. There is not much prospect of it at present. The doctor's friends and admirers are, I understand, about to present him with a Testimonial, 'expressive of their sympathy under the sad occurrence which has thrown a cloud over the opening of his Sanatorium, and of their undiminished confidence in his integrity and ability as a medical man.' We live, Augustus, in an age eminently favourable to the growth of all roguery which is careful enough to keep up appearances. In this enlightened nineteenth century, I look upon the doctor as one of our rising men.

"To turn now to pleasanter subjects than Sanatoriums, I may tell you that Miss Neelie is as good as well again, and is, in my humble opinion, prettier than ever. She is staying in London, under the care of a female relative—and Mr. Armadale satisfies her of the fact of his existence (in case she should forget it) regularly every day. They are to be married in the spring—unless Mrs. Milroy's death causes the ceremony to be postponed. The medical men are of opinion that the poor lady is sinking at last. It may be a question of weeks or a question of months, they can say no more. She is greatly altered—quiet and gentle, and anxiously affectionate with her husband and her child. But, in her case, this happy change is, it seems, a sign of approaching dissolution, from the medical point of view. There is a difficulty in making the poor old major understand this. He only sees that she has gone back to the likeness of her better self when he first married her; and he sits for hours by her bedside, now, and tells her about his wonderful clock.

"Mr. Midwinter, of whom you will next expect me to say something, is improving rapidly. After causing some anxiety at first to the medical men (who declared that he was suffering from a serious nervous shock, produced by circumstances about which their patient's obstinate silence kept them quite in the dark), he has rallied, as only men of his sensitive temperament (to quote the doctors again) *can* rally. He and Mr. Armadale are together in a quiet lodging. I saw him last week, when I was in London. His face showed signs of wear and tear, very sad to see in so young a man. But he spoke of himself and his future with a courage and hopefulness, which men of twice his years (if he has suffered, as I suspect him to have suffered) might have envied. If I know anything of humanity, this is no common man—and we shall hear of him yet in no common way.

"You will wonder how I came to be in London. I went up, with a return ticket (from Saturday to Monday) about that matter in dispute at our agent's. We had a tough fight—but, curiously enough, a point occurred to me just as I got up to go; and I went back to my chair, and settled the question in no time. Of course I stayed at Our Hotel in Covent Garden. William, the waiter, asked after you with the affection of a father; and Matilda, the chambermaid, said you almost persuaded her, that last time, to have the hollow tooth taken out of her lower jaw. I had the agent's second son (the young chap you nicknamed Mustapha, when he made that dreadful mess about the Turkish Securities) to dine with me on Sunday. A little incident happened in the evening which may be worth recording, as it connected itself with a certain old lady, who was not 'at home' when you and Mr. Armadale blundered on that house in Pimlico in the bygone time.

"Mustapha was like all the rest of you young men of the present day—he got restless after dinner. 'Let's go to a public amusement, Mr. Pedgift,' says he. 'Public amusement? Why, it's Sunday evening!' says I. 'All right, sir,' says Mustapha. 'They stop acting on the stage, I grant you, on Sunday evening—but they don't stop acting in the

pulpit. Come and see the last new Sunday performer of our time.' As he wouldn't have any more wine, there was nothing else for it, but to go.

"We went to a street at the West End, and found it blocked up with carriages. If it hadn't been Sunday night, I should have thought we were going to the opera. 'What did I tell you?' says Mustapha, taking me up to an open door with a gas star outside and a bill of the performance. I had just time to notice that I was going to one of a series of 'Sunday Evening Discourses on the Poms and Vanities of the World, by A Sinner Who Has Served Them,' when Mustapha jogged my elbow, and whispered, 'Half-a-crown is the fashionable tip.' I found myself between two demure and silent gentlemen, with plates in their hands, uncommonly well-filled already with the fashionable tip. Mustapha patronized one plate, and I the other. We passed through two doors into a long room, crammed with people. And there, on a platform at the farther end holding forth to the audience, was—not a man as I had expected—but a Woman, and that woman, MOTHER OLDERSHAW! You never listened to anything more eloquent in your life. As long as I heard her she was never once at a loss for a word anywhere. I shall think less of oratory as a human accomplishment, for the rest of my days, after that Sunday evening. As for the matter of the sermon, I may describe it as a narrative of Mrs. Oldershaw's experience among dilapidated women, profusely illustrated in the pious and penitential style. You will ask what sort of audience it was. Principally women, Augustus—and, as I hope to be saved, all the old harridans of the world of fashion, whom Mother Oldershaw had enamelled in her time, sitting boldly in the front places, with their cheeks ruddled with paint, in a state of devout enjoyment wonderful to see! I left Mustapha to hear the end of it. And I thought to myself, as I went out, of what Shakspeare says somewhere,—'Lord, what fools we mortals be!'

"Have I anything more to tell you, before I leave off? Only one thing that I can remember.

"That wretched old Bashwood has confirmed the fears I told you I had about him, when he was brought back here from London. There is no kind of doubt that he has really lost all the little reason he ever had. He is perfectly harmless, and perfectly happy. And he would do very well, if we could only prevent him from going out in his last new suit of clothes, smirking and smiling, and inviting everybody to his approaching marriage with the handsomest woman in England. It ends of course in the boys pelting him, and in his coming here crying to me, covered with mud. The moment his clothes are cleaned again, he falls back into his favourite delusion, and struts about before the church gates, in the character of a bridegroom, waiting for Miss Gwilt. We must get the poor wretch taken care of somewhere for the rest of the little time he has to live. Who would ever have thought of a man at his age falling in love? and who would ever have believed that the mischief that woman's beauty has done, could have reached as far in the downward direction as our superannuated old clerk?

"Good-by, for the present, my dear boy. If you see a particularly handsome snuff-box in Paris, remember—though your father scorns Testimonials—he doesn't object to receive a present from his son.

Yours affectionately,

A. PEDGIFT Senr.

"POSTSCRIPT.—I think it likely that the account you mention, in the French papers, of a fatal quarrel among some foreign sailors in one of the Lipari Islands, and of the death of their captain, among others, may really have been a quarrel among the scoundrels who robbed Mr. Armadale, and scuttled his yacht. *Those fellows*, luckily for society, can't always keep up appearances; and, in their case, Rogues and Retribution do occasionally come into collision with each other."

## CHAPTER II.

### MIDWINTER.

THE spring had advanced to the end of April. It was the eve of Allan's wedding-day. Midwinter and he had sat talking together at the great house till far into the night—till so far that it had struck twelve long since, and the wedding-day was already some hours old.

For the most part, the conversation had turned on the bridegroom's plans and projects. It was not till the two friends rose to go to rest, that Allan insisted on making Midwinter speak of himself. "We have had enough, and more than enough, of *my future*," he began, in his bluntly straightforward way. "Let's say something now, Midwinter, about yours. You have promised me, I know, that if you take to Literature, it shan't part us, and that if you go on a sea voyage, you will remember when you come back that my house is your home. But this is the last chance we have of being together in our old way; and I own I should like to know——" His voice faltered, and his eyes moistened a little. He left the sentence unfinished.

Midwinter took his hand and helped him, as he had often helped him to the words that he wanted, in the bygone time.

"You would like to know, Allan," he said, "that I shall not bring an aching heart with me to your wedding-day? If you will let me go back for a moment to the past, I think I can satisfy you."

They took their chairs again. Allan saw that Midwinter was moved. "Why distress yourself?" he asked kindly—"why go back to the past!"

"For two reasons, Allan. I ought to have thanked you long since for the silence you have observed, for my sake, on a matter that must have seemed very strange to you. You know what the name is which appears on the register of my marriage—and yet you have forborne to speak of it, from the fear of distressing me. Before you enter on your new life, let us come to a first and last understanding about this. I ask you—as one

more kindness to me—to accept my assurance (strange as the thing must seem to you) that I am blameless in this matter ; and I entreat you to believe that the reasons I have for leaving it unexplained, are reasons which, if Mr. Brock was living, Mr. Brock himself would approve.”

In those words, he kept the secret of the two names—and left the memory of Allan’s mother, what he had found it, a sacred memory in the heart of her son.

“One word more,” he went on—“a word which will take us, this time, from past to future. It has been said, and truly said, that out of Evil may come Good. Out of the horror and the misery of that night you know of, has come the silencing of a doubt which once made my life miserable with groundless anxiety about you and about myself. No clouds, raised by my superstition, will ever come between us again. I can’t honestly tell you that I am more willing now than I was when we were in the Isle of Man, to take what is called the rational view of your Dream. Though I know what extraordinary coincidences are perpetually happening in the experience of all of us, still I cannot accept coincidences as explaining the fulfilment of the Visions which our own eyes have seen. All I can sincerely say for myself is, what I think it will satisfy you to know, that I have learnt to view the purpose of the Dream with a new mind. I once believed that it was sent to rouse your distrust of the friendless man whom you had taken as a brother to your heart. I now *know* that it came to you as a timely warning to take him closer still. Does this help to satisfy you that I, too, am standing hopefully on the brink of a new life, and that while we live, brother, your love and mine will never be divided again ?”

They shook hands in silence. Allan was the first to recover himself. He answered in the few words of kindly assurance which were the best words that he could address to his friend.

“I have heard all I ever want to hear about the past,” he said ; “and I know what I most wanted to know about the future. Everybody says, Midwinter, you have a career before you—and I believe that everybody is right. Who knows what great things may happen before you and I are many years older ?”

“Who *need* know ?” said Midwinter, calmly. “Happen what may, God is all-merciful, God is all-wise. In those words, your dear old friend once wrote to me. In that faith, I can look back without murmuring at the years that are past, and can look on without doubting to the years that are to come.”

He rose, and walked to the window. While they had been speaking together, the darkness had passed. The first light of the new day met him as he looked out, and rested tenderly on his face.

## Cinderella.

---

It is, happily, not only in fairy tales that things sometimes fall out as one could wish, that anxieties are allayed, mistakes explained away, friends reconciled; that people inherit large fortunes, or are found out in their nefarious schemes; that long-lost children are discovered disguised in soot, that vessels come safely sailing into port after the storm; and that young folks who have been faithful to one another, are married off at last. Some of these young couples are not only happily married, but they also begin life in pleasant palaces tastefully decorated, and with all the latest improvements; with convenient cupboards, bath-rooms, back-staircases, speaking-tubes, lifts from one story to another, hot and cold water laid on; while outside lie well-kept parks, and gardens, and flower-beds; and from the muslin-veiled windows they can see the sheep browsing, the long shadowy grass, deer starting across the sunny glades, swans floating on the rivers, and sailing through the lilies and tall lithe reeds. There are fruit-gardens, too, where great purple plums are sunning on the walls, and cucumbers lying asleep among their cool dark leaves. There are glass-houses where heavy dropping bunches of grapes are hanging, so that one need only open one's mouth for them to fall into it all ready cooked and sweetened. Sometimes, in addition to all these good things, the young couple possess all the gracious gifts of youth, beauty, gay and amiable dispositions. Some one said, the other day, that it seemed as if Fate scarcely knew what she was doing, when she lavished with such profusion every gift and delight upon one pair of heads, while others were left bald, shorn, unheeded, dishevelled, forgotten, dishonoured. And yet the world would be almost too sad to bear, if one did not sometimes see happiness somewhere. One would scarcely believe in its possible existence, if there was nobody young, fortunate, prosperous, delighted; nobody to think of with satisfaction, and to envy a little. The sight of great happiness and prosperity is like listening to harmonious music, or looking at beautiful pictures, at certain times of one's life. It seems to suggest possibilities, it sets sad folks longing, but while they are wishing, still, may be, a little reproachfully, they realize the existence of what perhaps they had doubted before. Fate has been hard to them, but there is compensation even in this life. They tell themselves, "Which of us knows when his turn may come?" Happiness is a fact: it does lie within some people's grasp. To this or that young fairy couple, age, trial, and trouble may be in store; but now at least the present is golden; the innocent delights and triumphs of youth and nature are theirs.


I could not help moralizing a little in this way, when we were staying with young Lulworth and his wife the other day, coming direct from the



struggling dull atmosphere of home to the golden placidity of Lulworth farm. They drove us over to Cliffe Court—another oasis, so it seemed to me, in the arid plains of life. Cliffe Court is a charming, cheerful, Italian-looking house, standing on a hill in the midst of a fiery furnace of geraniums and flower-beds. "It belongs to young Sir Charles Richardson. He is six-and-twenty, and the handsomest man in the county," said Frank.

"Oh, no, Frank; you are joking, surely," said Cecilia; and then she stared, and then blushed in her odd way. She still stared sometimes when she was shy, as she used to do before she married.

So much of her former habits Cecilia had also retained, that as the clock struck eight o'clock every morning a great punctual breakfast-bell used to ring in the outer hall. The dining-room casement was wide open upon the beds of roses, the tea was made, Cecilia in her crisp white morning dress, and with all her wavy bronze hair curling about her face, was waiting to pour it out, the eggs were boiled, the bacon was frizzling hot upon the plate to a moment; there was no law allowed, not a minute's grace for anybody, no matter how lazy. They had been married a little more than two years, and were quite established in their country home. I wish I could perform some incantation like those of my friends the fairies, and conjure up the old farm bodily with a magic wave of my pen, or by drawing a triangle with a circle through it upon the paper—

 as the enchanters do. The most remarkable things about the farm were its curious and beautiful old chimneys—indeed the whole county of Sussex is celebrated for them, and the meanest little cottages have noble-looking stacks all ornamented, carved, and weather-beaten. There were gables also, and stony mullioned windows, and ancient steps with rusty rings hanging to them, affixed there to fasten the bridles of horses that would have run away several hundred years ago, if this precaution had not been taken. And then there were storehouses and ricks and barns, all piled with the abundance of the harvest. The farmyard was alive with young fowls and cocks and hens, and guinea-hens; those gentle little dowagers went about glistening in silver and grey, and Cecilia's geese came clamouring to meet her. I can see it all as I think about it. The old walls are all carved and ornamented, sometimes by art and work of man's hand, sometimes by time and lovely little natural mosses. House-leeks grow in clumps upon the thatch, a pretty girl is peeping through a lattice window, a door is open while a rush of sweet morning scent comes through the shining oaken passage from the herb-garden and orchard behind. Cows with their soft brown eyes and cautious tread are passing on their way to a field across the road. A white horse waiting by his stable door shakes his head and whinnies.

Frank and Cecilia took us for a walk after breakfast the first morning we came. We were taken to the stables first and the cow-houses, and then we passed out through a gate into a field, and crossing the field we got into a copse which skirted it, and so by many a lovely little winding path into the woods. Young Lulworth took our delight and admiration

as a personal compliment. It was all Lulworth property as far as we could see. I thought it must be strangely delightful to be the possessor of such beautiful hills, mist, sunshine and shadow, violet tones, song of birds, and shimmer of foliage; but Frank, I believe, looked at his future prospects from a material point of view. "You see it ain't the poetic part of it which pays," he said. But he appreciated it nevertheless, for Cecilia came out of the woods that morning, all decked out with great convolvulus leaves, changed to gold, which Frank had gathered as we went along and given to her. This year all the leaves were turning to such beautiful colours that people remarked upon it, and said they never remembered such a glowing autumn; even the year when Frank came to Dorlicote was not to compare to it. Browns and russet, and bright amber and gold flecks, berries, red leaves, a lovely blaze and glitter in the woods along the lanes and beyond the fields and copses. All the hills were melting with lovely colour in the clear warm autumn air, and the little nut-wood paths seemed like Aladdin's wonderful gardens, where precious stones hung to the trees; there was a twinkle and crisp shimmer, yellow leaves and golden light, yellow light and golden leaves, red hawthorn, convolvulus-berries, holly-berries beginning to glow, and heaped-up clustering purple black-berries. The sloe-berries, or snowy blackthorn fruit, with their soft gloom of colour, were over, and this was the last feast of the year. On the trees the apples hung red and bright, the pears seemed ready to drop from their branches and walls, the wheat was stacked, the sky looked violet behind the yellow ricks. A blackbird was singing like a ripple of water, somebody said. It is hard to refrain from writing of all these lovely things, though it almost is an impertinence to attempt to set them down on paper in long lists, like one of Messrs. Rippon and Burton's circulars. It seemed sad to be sad on such a morning and in such a world, but as we were walking along the high-road on our way back to the farm, we passed a long pale melancholy-looking man riding a big horse, with a little sweet-faced creature about sixteen who was cantering beside him. He took off his hat, the little girl kissed her hand as they passed, nodding a gay triumphant nod, and then we watched them down the hill, and disappearing at the end of the lane.

"I am quite glad to see Ella Ashford out riding with her father again," said Lulworth, holding the garden gate open for us to pass in.

"Mrs. Ashford called here a day or two ago with her daughter," said Cecilia. "They're going to stay at the Ravenhill, she told me. I thought Colonel Ashford was gone, too. I suppose he is come back."

"Of course he is," said Frank, "since we have just seen him with Ella, and of course his wife is away for the same reason."

"The child has grown very thin," said H.

"She has a difficult temper," said Cecilia—who, once she got an idea into her soft, silly head, did not easily get rid of it again. "She is a great anxiety to poor Mrs. Ashford. She is very different, she tells me, to Julia and Lisette Garnier. her own daughters."

"I knew them when they were children. We used to see a great deal of Mrs. Ashford when she was first a widow, and I went to her second wedding."

We were at Paris one year—ten years before the time I am writing of—and Mrs. Garnier lived over us, in a tiny little apartment. She was very poor, and very grandly dressed, and she used to come rustling in to see us. Rustling is hardly the word, she was much too graceful and womanly a person to rustle; her long silk gowns used to ripple, and wave, and flow away as she came and went; and her beautiful eyes used to fill with tears as she drank her tea and confided her troubles to us. H. never liked her; but I must confess to a very kindly feeling for the poor, gentle, beautiful, forlorn young creature, so passionately lamenting the loss she had sustained in Major-General Garnier. He had left her very badly off, although she was well connected, and Lady Jane Pepper-corne, her cousin, had offered her and her two little girls a home at Ravenhill, she used to tell us in her *éploré* manner. I do not know why she never availed herself of the offer. She said once that she would not be doing justice to her precious little ones, to whom she devoted herself with the assistance of an experienced attendant. My impression is, that the little ones used to scrub one another's little ugly faces, and plait one another's little light Chinese-looking tails, while the experienced attendant laced and dressed and adorned, and scented and powdered their mamma. She really was a beautiful young woman, and would have looked quite charming if she had left herself alone for a single instant, but she was always posing. She had dark bright eyes; she had a lovely little arched mouth; and hands so white, so soft, so covered with rings, that one felt that it was indeed a privilege when she said, "Oh, *how* do you do?" and extended two or three gentle confiding fingers. At first she went nowhere except to church, and to walk in the retired paths of the Park de Monceau, although she took in *Galignani* and used to read the lists of arrivals. But by degrees she began to—chiefly to please me, she said—go out a little, to make a few acquaintances. One day I was walking with her down the Champs Elysées, when she suddenly started and looked up at a tall, melancholy-looking gentleman who was passing, and who stared at her very hard; and soon after that it was that she began telling me she had determined to make an effort for her children's sake, and to go a little more into society. She wanted me to take her to Madame de Girouette's, where she heard I was going that evening, and where she believed she should meet an old friend of hers, whom she particularly wished to see again. Would I help her? Would I be so *very* good? Of course I was ready to do anything I could. She came punctual to her time, all grey moire and black lace; a remise was sent for, and we set off, jogging along the crowded streets, with our two lamps lighted, and a surly man, in a red waistcoat and an oilskin hat, to drive us to the Rue de Lille. All the way there, Mrs. Garnier was strange, silent, nervous, excited.

Her eyes were like two shining craters, I thought, when we arrived, and as we climbed up the interminable flights of stairs. I guessed who was the old friend with the grey moustache in a minute: a good, well-looking, sick-looking man, standing by himself in a corner.

I spent a curious evening, distracted between Madame de Girouette's small talk, to which I was supposed to be listening, and Mrs. Garnier's murmured conversation with her old friend in the corner, to which I was vainly endeavouring not to attend.

"My dear, imagine a *bouillon*, surmounted with little tiny flutings all round the bottom, and then three *ruches*, alternating with three little *volants*, with great *choux* at regular intervals; over this a tunic, caught up at the side by a *jardinière*, a *ceinture à la Bébé*."

"When you left us I was a child, weak, foolish, easily frightened and influenced. It nearly broke my heart. Look me in the face, if you can, and tell me you do not believe me," I heard Mrs. Garnier murmuring in a low, thrilling whisper. She did not mean me to hear it, but she was too absorbed in what she was saying to think of all the people round about her.

"Ah, Lydia, what does it matter now?" the friend answered in a sad voice, which touched me somehow. "We have both been wrecked in our ventures, and life has not much left for either of us now."

"It is cut *en biais*," Madame de Girouette went on; "the pieces which are taken out at one end are let in at the other: the effect is quite charming, and the economy is immense."

"For you, you married the person you loved," Lydia Garnier was answering; "for me, out of the wreck, I have at least my children, and a remembrance, and a friend—is it so? Ah, Henry, have I not at least a friend?"

"Everybody wants one," said Madame de Girouette, concluding her conversation, "and they cannot be made fast enough to supply the demand. I am promised mine to wear to-morrow at the opening of the salon, but I am afraid that you have no chance. How the poor thing is overworked—her magazin is crowded—I believe she will leave it all in charge of her première demoiselle, and retire to her campagne as soon as the season is over."

"And you will come and see me, will you not?" said the widow as we went away, looking up. I do not know to this day if she was acting. I believe, to do her justice, that she was only acting what she really felt, as many of us do at times.

I took Mrs. Garnier home as I had agreed. I did not ask any questions. I met Colonel Ashford on the stairs next day, and I was not surprised when, about a week after, Mrs. Garnier came into the drawing-room early one morning, sinking down at my feet in a careless attitude, seized my hand, and said that she had come for counsel, for advice. She had had an offer from a person whom she respected, Colonel Ashford, whom I might have remarked that night at Madame de Girouette's; would I—would I give her my candid opinion; for her children's sake did I not think it would be well to think seriously? . . .

"And for your own, too, my dear," said I. "Colonel Ashford is in Parliament, he is very well off. I believe you will be making an excellent marriage. Accept him by all means."

"Dear friend, since this is your real heartfelt opinion, I value your judgment too highly not to act by its dictates. Once, years ago, there was thought of this between me and Henry. I will now confide to you, my heart has never failed from its early devotion. A cruel fate separated us. I married. He married. We are brought together as by a miracle, but our three children will never know the loss of their parents' love," &c. &c. Glance, hand-pressure, &c.—tears, &c. Then a long, soft, irritating kiss. I felt for the first time in my life inclined to box her ears.

The little Garniers certainly gained by the bargain, and the colonel sat down to write home to his little daughter, and tell her the news.

Poor little Ella, I wonder what sort of anxieties Mrs. Ashford had caused to her before she had been Ella's father's wife a year. Miss Ashford made the best of it. She was a cheery, happy little creature, looking at everything from the sunny side, adoring her father, running wild out of doors, but with an odd turn for house-keeping, and order and method at home. Indeed, for the last two years, ever since she was twelve years old, she had kept her father's house. Languid, gentle, easily impressed, Colonel Ashford was quite curiously influenced by this little daughter. She could make him come and go, and like and dislike. I think it was Ella who sent him into Parliament: she could not bear Sir Rainham Richardson, their next neighbour, to be an M.P., and an oracle, while her father was only a retired colonel. Her ways and her sayings were a strange and pretty mixture of childishness and precociousness. She would be ordering dinner, seeing that the fires were alight in the study and dining-room, writing notes to save her father trouble (Colonel Ashford hated trouble), in her cramped, crooked, girlish hand; the next minute she was perhaps flying, agile-footed, round and round the old hall, skipping up and down the oak stairs, laughing out like a child as she played with her puppy, and dangled a little ball of string under his black nose. Puff, with a youthful bark, would seize the ball and go scuttling down the corridors with his prize, while Ella pursued him with her quick flying feet. She could sing charmingly, with a clear, true, piping voice, like a bird's, and she used to dance to her own singing in the prettiest way imaginable. Her dancing was really remarkable: she had the most beautiful feet and hands, and as she seesawed in time, still singing and moving in rhythm, any one seeing her could not fail to have been struck by the weird-like little accomplishment. Some girls have a passion for dancing—boys have a hundred other ways and means of giving vent to their activity and exercising their youthful limbs, and putting out their eager young strength; but girls have no such chances; they are condemned to walk through life for the most part quietly, soberly, putting a curb on the life

and vitality which is in them. They long to throw it out, they would like to have wings to fly like a bird, and so they dance sometimes with all their hearts, and might, and energy. People rarely talk of the poetry of dancing, but there is something in it of the real inspiration of art. The music plays, the heart beats time, the movements flow as naturally as the branches of a tree go waving in the wind. . . .

One day a naughty boy, who had run away, for a lark, from his tutor and his schoolroom at Cliffe, hard by, and who was hiding in a ditch, happened to see Ella alone in a field. She was looking up at the sky and down at the pretty scarlet and white pimpurnels, and listening to the birds; suddenly she felt so strong and so light, and as if she *must* jump about a little, she was so happy, and so she did, shaking her pretty golden mane, waving her poppies high over head, and singing higher and higher, like one of the larks that were floating in mid air. The naughty boy was much frightened, and firmly believed that he had seen a fairy.

"She was all in white," he said afterwards, in an aggrieved tone of voice. "She'd no hat, or anything; she bounded six foot into the air. You never saw anything like it."

Master Richardson's guilty conscience had something to do with his alarm. When his friend made a few facetious inquiries he answered quite sulkily,—“Black pudden? she offered me no pudden or anything else. I only wish you had been there, that's all, then you'd believe a fellow when he says a thing, instead of always chaffing.”

Ella gave up her dancing after the new wife came to Ash Place. It was all so different; she was not allowed any more to run out in the fields alone. She supposed it was very nice having two young companions like Lisette and Julia, and at first, in her kindly way, the child did the honours of her own home, showed them the way which led to her rabbits, her most secret bird's nest, the old ivy-grown smugglers' hole in the hollow. Lisette and Julia went trotting about in their frill trousers and Chinese tails of hair, examining everything, making their calculations, saying nothing, taking it all in (poor little Ella was rather puzzled, and could not make them out). Meantime her new mother was gracefully wandering over the house on her husband's arm, and standing in attitudes admiring the view from the windows, and asking gentle little indifferent questions, to all of which Colonel Ashford replied unsuspectingly enough.

"And so you give the child an allowance? Is she not very young for one? And is this Ella's room? how prettily it is furnished."

"She did it all herself," said her father, smiling. "Look at her rocking-horse, and her dolls' house, and her tidy little arrangements."

The house-keeping books were in a little pile on the table; a very suspicious-looking doll was lying on the bed, so were a pile of towels, half marked, but neatly folded; there was a bird singing in a cage, a squirrel, a little aged dog—Puff's grandmother—asleep on a cushion, some sea-anemones in a glass, gaping with their horrid mouths, strings of birds' eggs were suspended, and whips were hanging up on the walls. There



was a great bunch of flowers in the window, and a long daisy-chain fastened up in festoons round the glass; and then on the toilette-table there were one or two valuable trinkets set out in their little cases.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Ashford, "is it not a pity to leave such temptation in the way of the servants? Little careless thing—had I not better keep them for her, Henry? they are very beautiful." And Mrs. Ashford softly collected Ella's treasures in her long white hands.

"Ella has some very valuable things," Colonel Ashford said. "She keeps them locked up in a strong box, I believe; yes, there it is in the corner."

"It had much better come into my closet," Mrs. Ashford said. "Oh, how heavy! Come here, strong-arm, and help me." Colonel Ashford obediently took up the box as he was bid.

"And I think I may as well finish marking the dusters," said Mrs. Ashford, looking round the room as she collected them all in her apron. "The books, of course, are now my duty. I think Ella will not be sorry to be relieved of her cares. Do you know, dear, I think I am glad, for her sake, that you married me, as well as for my own. I think she has had too much put upon her, is a little too decided, too *prononcée* for one so young. One would not wish to see her grow up before the time. Let them remain young and careless while they can, Henry."

So when Ella came back to mark the dusters that she had been hemming, because Mrs. Milton was in a hurry for them and the housemaid had hurt her eye, they were gone, and so were her neat little books that she had taken such pride in, and had been winding up before she gave them to Mrs. Ashford to keep in future; so was her pretty coral necklace that she wore of an evening; and her pearls with the diamond clasp; and her beautiful clear carbuncle brooch that she was so fond of, and her little gold clasp bracelet. Although Eliza and Susan had lived with them all her life long, *they* had never taken her things, poor Ella thought, a little bitterly. "Quite unsuitable, at your age, dearest," Mrs. Ashford murmured, kissing her fondly.

And Ella never got them back any more. Many and many other things there were she never got back, poor child. Ah me! treasures dearer to her than the pretty coral necklace and the gold clasp bracelet—liberty, confidence—the tender atmosphere of admiring love in which she had always lived, the first place in her father's heart. That should never be hers again some one had determined.

The only excuse for Mrs. Ashford is that she was very much in love with her husband, and so selfishly attached to him that she grudged the very care and devotion which little Ella had spent upon her father all these years past. Every fresh proof of thought and depth of feeling in such a childish little creature hurt and vexed the other woman. Ella must be taught her place, this lady determined, not in so many words. Alas! if we could always set our evil thoughts and schemes to work, it would perhaps be well with us, and better far than drifting, unconscious and unwarned, into nameless evil, unowned to oneself, scarcely recognized.

And so the years went by. Julia and Lisette grew up into two great tall fashionable bouncing young ladies; they pierced their ears, turned up their pigtails, and dressed very elegantly. Lisette used to wear a coral necklace, Julia was partial to a clear carbuncle brooch her mother gave her. Little Ella, too, grew up like a little green plant springing up through the mild spring rains and the summer sunshine, taller and prettier and sadder, every year. And yet perhaps it was as well after all that early in life she had to learn to be content with a very little share of its bounties: she might have been spoilt and over-indulged if things had gone on as they began, if nothing had ever thwarted her, and if all her life she had had her own way. She was a bright smiling little thing for all her worries, with a sweet little face; indeed her beauty was so remarkable, and her manner so simple and charming, that Julia and Lisette, who were a year or two her elders, used to complain to their mother nobody ever noticed them when Ella was by. Lady Jane Peppercorne, their own cousin, was always noticing her, and actually gave her a potato off her own plate the other day.

"I fear she is a very forward, designing girl. I shall not think of taking her out in London this year," Mrs. Ashford said, with some asperity; "nor shall I allow her to appear at our crôquet party next week. She is far too young to be brought out."

So Ella was desired to remain in her own room on this occasion. She nearly cried, poor little thing, but what could she do? her father was away, and when he came back Mrs. Ashford would be sure to explain everything to him. Mrs. Ashford had explained life in so strangely ingenious a manner that he had got to see it in a very topsy-turvy fashion. Some things she had explained away altogether, some she had distorted and twisted, poor little Ella had been explained and explained, until there was scarcely anything of her left at all. Poor child, she sometimes used to think she had not a single friend in the world, but she would chide herself for such fancies: it must be fancy. Her father loved her as much as ever, but he was engrossed by business, and it was not to be expected he should show what he felt before Julia and Lisette, who might be hurt. And then Ella would put all her drawers in order, or sew a seam, or go out and pull up a bedful of weeds to chase such morbid fancies out of her mind.

Lady Jane Peppercorne, of whom mention has been already made, had two houses, one in Onslow Square, another at Hampstead. She was very rich, she had never married, and was consequently far more sentimental than ladies of her standing usually are. She was a flighty old lady, and lived sometimes at one house, sometimes at the other, sometimes at hotels here and there, as the fancy seized her. She was very kind as well as flighty, and was constantly doing generous things, and trying to help any one who seemed to be in trouble or who appeared to wish for anything she had it in her power to grant.

So when Mrs. Ashford said,—“Oh, Lady Jane, pity me! My husband says he cannot afford to take me to town this year. I should so like to go, for the dear girls' sake of course——” Lady Jane gave a little grunt, and said,—“I will lend you my house in Onslow Square, if you like—that is, if you keep my room ready for me in case I want to come up at any time. But I daresay you won't care for such an unfashionable quarter of the world.”

“Oh, Lady Jane, how exceedingly kind, how very delightful and unexpected!” cried Mrs. Ashford, who had been hoping for it all the time, and who hastened to communicate the news to Lisette and Julia.

“I shall want a regular outfit, mamma,” said Julia, who was fond of dress. “Perhaps we shall meet young Mr. Richardson in town.”

“I shall be snapped up directly by some one, I expect,” said Lisette, who was very vain, and thought herself irresistible.

“Am I to come, too?” asked Ella, timidly, from the other end of the room, looking up from her sewing.

“I do not know,” replied her stepmother, curtly, and Ella sighed a little wistfully, and went on stitching.

“At what age shall you let me come out?” she presently asked, shyly.

“When you are fit to be trusted in the world, and have cured your unruly temper,” said Mrs. Ashford. Ella's eyes filled with tears, and she blushed up; but her father came into the room, and she smiled through her tears, and thought to herself that since her temper was so bad, she had better begin to rule it that very instant. . . .

It is a bright May morning after a night of rain, and although this is London and not the country any more, Onslow Square looks bright and clean. Lady Jane has had the house smartly done up: clean chintz, striped blinds, a balcony full of mignonette. She has kept two little rooms for herself and her maid, but all the rest of the house is at the Ashfords' disposal. Everybody is satisfied, and Ella is enchanted with her little room upstairs. Mrs. Ashford is making lists of visits and dinner-parties and milliners' addresses; Lisette is looking out of window at some carriages which are passing; the children and nurses are sitting under the trees in the square; Julia is looking at herself in the glass and practising her court curtsies; and Ella is in the back-room arranging a great heap of books in a bookcase. “I should so like to go to the Palace, mamma,” she says, and looking up with a smudgy face, for the books were all dirty and covered with dust. “Do you think there will be room for me?”

Ella had no proper pride, as it is called, and always used to take it for granted she was wanted, and that some accident prevented her from going with the others. “I am sorry there is no room for you, Ella,” said Mrs. Ashford, in her deep voice; “I have asked Mr. Richardson to come with us, and if he fails, I promised to call for the Countess Bricabrac. Pray, if you do not care for walking in the square this afternoon, see

that my maid puts my things properly away in the cupboards, as well as Julia's and Lisette's, and help her to fold the dresses, because it is impossible for one person to manage these long trains unassisted."

"Very well," said Ella, cheerfully. "I hope you will have a pleasant day. How nice it must be to be going."

"I wish you would learn not to wish for everything and anything that you happen to hear about, Ella," said Mrs. Ashford. "If you hear any visitors coming, go away, for I cannot allow you to be seen in this dirty state."

"There's a ring," said Ella, gathering some of the books together. "Good-by."

Young Mr. Richardson, who was announced immediately after, passed a pretty maid-servant, carrying a great pile of folios upon the stairs. She looked so little fitted for the task that he involuntarily stopped and said, "Can I assist you?" The little maid smiled, and shook her head, without speaking. "What a charming little creature!" thought Mr. Richardson. He came to say that he and his friend, Jack Prettyman, were going to ride down together, and would join the ladies at the Palace.

"We are to pick Colonel Ashford up at his club," Mrs. Ashford said, "and Madame de Bricabrac. I shall count upon you then." And the young ladies waved him gracious *au revoir*s from the balcony.

"Oh! don't you like white waistcoats, Julia?" said Lisette, as she watched him down the street.

They are gone. Ella went up to help with the dresses, but presently the maid said in her rude way that she must go down to dinner, and she could not have anybody messing the things about while she was away. Carter hated having a "spy" set over her, as she called Miss Ashford. The poor little spy went back to the drawing-room. She was too melancholy and out of spirits to dress herself and go out. Her face was still smudgy, and she had cried a little over Lisette's pink tarlatane. Her heart sank down, down, down. She did so long for a little fun and delight, and laughter and happiness. She knew her father would say, "Where is Ella?" and her mother would answer, "Oh, I really cannot account for Ella's fancies. She was sulky this morning again. I cannot manage her strange tempers."

The poor child chanced to see her shabby face and frock and tear-stained cheeks in one of the tall glasses over the gilt tables. It was very silly, but the wibegone little face touched her so; she was so sorry for it that all of a sudden she burst out sob, sob, sob, crying, "Oh, how nice it must be to be loved and cherished, and very happy," she thought. "Oh, I could be so good if they would only love me." She could not bear to think more directly of her father's change of feeling. She sat down on the floor, as she had a way of doing, all in a little heap, staring at the empty grate. The fire had burnt out, and no one had thought of relighting it. For a few minutes her tears overflowed, and she cried and cried in two rivulets down her black little face. She thought how forlorn

she was, what a dull life she led, how alone she lived—such a rush of regret and misery overpowered her, that she hid her face in her hands, unconscious of anything else but her own sadness. . . .

She did not hear the bell ring, nor a carriage stop, nor Lady Jane's footsteps. She came across the room and stood looking at her. "Why, my dear little creature, what is the matter?" said the old lady at last. "Crying? don't you know it is very naughty to cry, no matter how bad things are? Are they all gone—are you all alone?"

Ella jumped up, quite startled, blushed, wiped her tears in a smudge. "I thought nobody would see me cry," she said, "for they are all gone to the Crystal Palace."

"And did they leave you behind quite by yourself?" the old lady asked.

"They were so sorry they had no room for me," said good-natured little Ella. She could not bear to hear people blamed. "They had promised Madame de Bricabrac."

"Is that all?" said Lady Jane, in her kind imperious way. "Why, I have driven in from Hampstead on purpose to go there too. There's a great flower-show to-day, and you know I am a first-rate gardener. I've brought up a great hamper of things. Put on your bonnet, wash your face, and come along directly. I've plenty of room. Who is that talking in that rude way?" for at that instant Carter called out from the drawing-room door, without looking in,—

"Now then, Miss Ella, you can come and help me fold them dresses. I'm in a hurry."

Carter was much discomposed when Lady Jane appeared, irate, dignified.

"Go upstairs directly, and do not forget yourself again," said the old lady.

"Oh, I think I ought to go and fold up the dresses," said Ella, hesitating, flushing, blushing, and looking more than grateful. "How very very kind of you to think of me. I'm afraid they wouldn't—I'm afraid I've no bonnet. Oh, thank you, I—but——"

"Nonsense, child," said Lady Jane; "my maid shall help that woman. Here," ringing the bell violently, to the footman,—“what have you done with the hamper I brought up? let me see it unpacked here immediately. Can't trust those people, my dear—always see to everything myself."

All sorts of delicious things, scents, colours, spring-flowers and vegetables came out of the hamper in delightful confusion. It was a hamper full of treasures—sweet, bright, delicious-tasted—asparagus, daffodillies, bluebells, salads, cauliflowers, hot-house flowers, cowslips from the fields, azalias. Ella's natty little fingers arranged them all about the room in plates and in vases so perfectly and so quickly, that old Lady Jane cried out in admiration,—

"Why, you would be a first-rate girl, if you didn't cry. Here, you

John, get some bowls and trays for the vegetables, green pease, strawberries; and oh, here's a cucumber and a nice little early pumpkin. I had it forced, my dear. Your stepmother tells me she is passionately fond of pumpkins. Here, John, take all this down to the cook; tell her to put it in a cool larder, and order the carriage and horses round directly. Now then," to Ella, briskly, "go and put your things on, and come along with me. *I'll* make matters straight. I always do. There, go directly. I can't have the horses kept. Raton, my coachman, is terrible if he is kept waiting—frightens me to death by his driving when he is put out."

Ella did not hesitate a moment longer; she rushed upstairs; her little feet flew as they used to do formerly. She came down in a minute, panting, rapturous, with shining hair and a bright face, in her very best Sunday frock, cloak, and hat. Shabby enough they were, but she was too happy, too excited, to think about the deficiencies in her toilet.

"Dear me, this will never do, I see," said the old lady, looking at her disapprovingly; but she smiled so kindly as she spoke, that Ella was not a bit frightened.

"Indeed, I have no other," she said.

"John," cried the old lady, "where is my maid? Desire her to come and speak to me directly. Now then, sir!"

All her servants knew her ways much too well not to fly at her commands. A maid appeared as if by magic.

"Now, Batter, be quick; get that blue and silver bournous of mine from the box upstairs—it will look very nice; and a pair of grey kid gloves, Batter; and let me see, my dear, you wouldn't look well in a brocade. No, that grey satin skirt, Batter; her own white bodice will do, and we can buy a bonnet as we go along. Now, quick; am I to be kept waiting all day?"

Ella in a moment found herself transformed somehow into the most magnificent lady she had seen for many a day. It was like a dream, she could hardly believe it; she saw herself move majestically, sweeping in silken robes across the very same pier-glass, where a few minutes before she had looked at the wretched little melancholy creature, crying with a dirty face, and watched the sad tears flowing. . . .

"Now then—now then," cried Lady Jane, who was always saying "Now then," and urging people on—"where's my page—are the outriders there? They are all workhouse boys, my dear; they came to me as thin and starved as church mice, and then I fatten them up and get 'em situations. I always go with outriders. One's obliged to keep up a certain dignity in these Chartist days—universal reform—suffrage—vote by ballot. I've no patience with Mr. Gladstone, and it all rests with us to keep ourselves well aloof. Get in, get in! Drive to Sydenham, if you please."

Lady Jane's manners entirely changed when she spoke to Raton. And it is a fact that coachmen from their tall boxes rule with a very high hand, and most ladies tremble before them. Raton looked very alarming in his wig, with his shoebuckles and great red face.



What a fairy tale it was! There was little Ella sitting in this lovely chariot, galloping down the Brompton Road, with all the little boys cheering and hurrahing; and the little outriders clattering on ahead, and the old lady sitting bolt upright as pleased as Punch. She really *had* been going to Sydenham; but I think if she had not, she would have set off instantly, if she thought she would make anybody happy by so doing. They stopped at a shop in the Brompton Road—the wondering shop-woman came out.

"A white bonnet, if you please," said Lady Jane. "That will do very well. Here, child, put it on, and mind you don't crease the strings." And then away and away they went once more through the town, the squares, over the bridges. They saw the ships and steamers coming down the silver Thames, but the carriage never stopped: the outriders paid the tolls and clattered on ahead. They rolled along pleasant country lanes and fields, villas and country-houses, road-side inns and pedestrians, and crawling carts and carriages. At the end of three-quarters of an hour, during which it seemed to Ella as if the whole gay *cortège* had been flying through the air, they suddenly stopped at last, at the great gates of a Crystal Palace blazing in the sun and standing on a hill. A crowd was looking on. All sorts of grand people were driving up in their carriages; splendid ladies were passing in. Two gentlemen in white waistcoats were dismounting from their horses just as Ella and Lady Jane were arriving. They rushed up to the carriage-door, and helped them to the ground.

"And pray, sir, who are you?" said Lady Jane, as soon as she was safely deposited on her two little flat feet with the funny old-fashioned shoes.

The young man coloured up and bowed. "You don't remember me, Lady Jane," he said. "Charles Richardson—I have had the honour of meeting you at Ash Place, and at Cliffe, my uncle's house. This is my friend Mr. Prettyman."

"This is Mr. Richardson, my dear Ella, and that is Mr. Prettyman. Tell them to come back in a couple of hours" (to the page), "and desire Raton to see that the horses have a feed. Now then—yes—give her your arm, and you are going to take me?—very well," to the other white waistcoat; and so they went into the palace.

What are young princes like now-a-days? Do they wear diamond aigrettes, swords at their sides, top-boots, and little short cloaks over one shoulder? The only approach to romance that I can see, is the flower in their button-hole, and the nice little moustaches and curly beards in which they delight. But all the same besides the flower in the button, there is also, I think, a possible flower of sentiment still growing in the soft hearts of princes in these days, as in the old days long, long ago.

Charles Richardson was a short ugly little man, very gentlemanlike, and well dressed. He was the next heir to a baronetcy; he had a pale face and a snub nose, and such a fine estate in prospect—Cliffe Court its name was—that I do not wonder at Miss Lisette's admiration for

him. As for Ella, she thought how kind he had been on the stairs that morning ; she thought what a bright genial smile he had. How charming he looked, she said to herself ; no, never, never, had she dreamt of any one so nice. She was quite—more than satisfied, no prince in romance would have seemed to her what this one was, there actually walking beside her. As for Richardson himself, it was a case of love at first sight. He had seen many thousand young ladies in the last few years, but not one of them to compare with this sweet-faced, ingenuous, tender, bright little creature. He offered her his arm, and led her along.

Ella observed that he said a few words to his friend ; she little guessed their purport. " You go first," he whispered, " and if you see the Ashfords get out of the way. I should have to walk with those girls, and my heart is here transfixed for ever." . . . " Where have I seen you before ? " he went on, talking to Ella, as they roamed through the beautiful courts and gardens, among fountains and flowers, and rare objects of art. " Forgive me for asking you, but I must have met you somewhere long ago, and have never forgotten you. I am haunted by your face." Ella was too much ashamed to tell him where and how it was they had met that very morning. She remembered him perfectly, but she thought he would rush away and leave her, if she told him that the untidy little scrub upon the stairs had been herself. And she was so happy: music playing, flowers blooming, the great wonderful fairy palace flashing over head ; the kind, clever, delightful young man to escort her ; the gay company, the glitter, the perfume, the statues, the interesting figures of Indians, the dear, dear, kind Lady Jane to look to for sympathy and for good-humoured little nods of encouragement. She had *never* been so happy ; she had never known what a wonder the palace might be. Her heart was so full. It was all so lovely, so inconceivably beautiful and delightful, that she was nearly tipsy with delight ; her head turned for an instant, and she clung to young Richardson's protecting arm.

" Are you faint—are you ill ? " he said, anxiously.

" Oh, no ! " said Ella, " it's only that everything is so beautiful ; it is almost more than I can bear. I—I am not often so happy ; oh, it is so charming ! I do not think anything could be so delightful in all the world." She looked herself so charming and unconscious as she spoke, looking up with her beautiful face out of her white bonnet, that the young fellow felt as if he *must* propose to her, then and there, off-hand, on the very spot ; and at the instant he looked up passionately—O horror !—he caught sight of the Ashfords, mother, daughters, Madame de Bricabrac, all in a row, coming right down upon them.

" Prettyman, this way to the right," cried little Richardson, desperately ; and Prettyman, who was a good-natured fellow, said, " This way, please, Lady Jane ; there's some people we want to avoid over there."

\* \* \* \* \*

" I'm sure it was," Lisette said. " I knew the colour of his waistcoat. Who could he have been walking with, I wonder ? "

"Some lady of rank, evidently," said Julia. "I think they went up into the gallery in search of us."

"Let us go into the gallery, dears," said Mrs. Ashford, and away they trudged.

\* \* \* \*

The young men and their companions had gone into the Tropics, and meanwhile were sitting under a spreading palm-tree, eating pink ices; while the music played and played more delightfully, and all the air was full of flowers and waltzes, of delight, of sentiment. To young Richardson the whole palace was Ella in everything, in every sound, and flower and fountain; to Ella, young Richardson seemed an enormous giant, and his kind little twinkling eyes were shining all round her.

Poor dear! she was so little used to being happy, her happiness almost overpowered her.

"Are you going to the ball at Guildhall, to-morrow?" Mr. Richardson was saying to his unknown princess. "How shall I ever meet you again? will you not tell me your name? But——"

"I wonder what o'clock it is, and where your mother can be, Ella," said Lady Jane; "it's very odd we have not met."

\* \* \* \*

"I can't imagine where they can have hid themselves," said Julia, very crossly, from the gallery overhead.

"I'm so tired, and I'm ready to drop," said Miss Lisette.

"Oh, let us sit," groaned Madame de Bricabrac. "I can walk no more; what does it matter if we do not find your friends?"

"If we take our places at the door," said Lisette, "we shall be sure to catch them as they pass."

\* \* \* \*

"Perhaps I may be able to go to the ball," said the princess, doubtfully. "I—I don't know." Lady Jane made believe not to be listening. The voices in the gallery passed on. Lady Jane having finished her ice, pulled out her little watch, and gave a scream of terror. "Heavens! my time is up," she said. "Raton will frighten me out of my wits, driving home. Come, child, come—come—come. Make haste—thank these gentlemen for their escort," and she went skurrying along, a funny little active figure, followed by the breathless young people. They got to the door at last, where Raton was waiting, looking very ferocious. "Oh, good-by," said Ella. "Thank you so much," as Richardson helped her into the chariot.

"And you will not forget me?" he said, in a low voice. "I shall not need any name to remember you by."

"My name is Ella," she answered, blushing, and driving off; and then Ella flung her arms round Lady Jane, and began to cry again, and said, "Oh, I have been so happy! so happy! How good, good of you to make me so happy! Oh, thank you, dear Lady Jane!"

The others came back an hour after them, looking extremely cross,

and were much surprised to find Lady Jane in the drawing-room. "I am not going back till Wednesday," said the old lady. "I've several things to do in town. . . . Well, have you had a pleasant day?"

"Not at all," said Mrs. Ashford plaintively. "The colonel deserted us; we didn't find our young men till just as we were coming away. We are all very tired, and want some supper. Some of your delicious fruit, Lady Jane."

"Oh, dear, how tired I am!" said Julia.

"Poor Richardson was in very bad spirits," said Lisette.

"What a place it is for losing one another," said old Lady Jane. "I took Ella there this afternoon, and though I looked about I couldn't see you anywhere."

"*Ella!*" cried the other girls, astonished; "was *she* there?" . . . But they were too much afraid of Lady Jane to object more openly.

That evening, after the others left the room, as Ella was pouring out the tea, she summoned up courage to ask whether she might go to the ball at Guildhall with the others next evening. "Pray, pray, please take me," she implored. Mrs. Ashford looked up amazed at her audacity.

Poor little Ella! refused, scorned, snubbed, wounded, pained, and disappointed. She finished pouring out the tea in silence, while a few bitter scalding tears dropped from her eyes into the teacups. Colonel Ashford drank some of them, and asked for more sugar to put into his cup.

"There, never mind," he said, kindly. He felt vexed with his wife, and sorry for the child; but he was, as usual, too weak to interfere. "You know you are too young to go into the world, Ella. When your sisters are married, then *your* turn will come."

Alas! would it ever come? The day's delight had given her a longing for more; and now she felt the beautiful glittering vision was only a vision, and over already: the cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palace; and the charming prince himself—was he a vision too? Ah! it was too sad to think of. Presently Lisette and Julia came back: they had been upstairs to see about their dresses.

"I shall wear my bird-of-paradise, and my yellow tarlatane," said Lisette; "gold and purple is such a lovely contrast."

"Gobert has sent me a lovely thing," said Julia; "tricolour flounces all the way up—she has so much taste."

Good old Lady Jane asked her maid next morning if any dress was being got ready for Miss Ella. Hearing that she was not going, and that no preparations were being made, she despatched Batter on a secret mission, and ordered her carriage at nine o'clock that evening. She went out herself soon after breakfast in a hired brougham, dispensing with the outriders for once. Ella was hard at work all day for her sisters: her little fingers quilled, fluted, frilled, pleated, pinned, tacked the trimmings on their dresses more dexterously than any dressmaker or maid-servant could do. She looked so pretty, so kind, and so tired, so wistful, as she came to help

them to dress, that Lisette was quite touched, and said,—“Well, Ella, I shouldn't wonder if, after I am snapped up, you were to get hold of a husband some day. I daresay *some* people might think you nice-looking.”

“Oh, do you think so really, Lisette?” said Ella, quite pleased; and then flustering, “Do you think . . . Shall you see Mr. Richardson?”

“Of course I shall,” said Lisette. “He was talking great nonsense yesterday after we found him; saying that he had met with perfection at last—very devoted altogether; scarcely spoke to me at all; but that is the greatest proof of devotion, you know. I know what he meant very well. I shouldn't be at all surprised if he was to propose to-night. I don't know whether I shall have him. I'm always afraid of being thrown away,” said Lisette, looking over her shoulder at her train.

Ella longed to send a message, a greeting of some sort, to Lisette's adorer. Oh, how she envied her; what would she not have given to be going too? . . .

“What! are not you dressing, child?” said Lady Jane, coming into the room. “Are they again obliged to call for Madame de Bricabrac? I had looked up a pair of shoebuckles for you in case you went; but keep them all the same, they only want a little rubbing up.”

“Oh, thank you; how pretty they are; how kind you are to me,” said Ella, sadly. “I—I—am not going.” And she burst out crying.

It was just dreadful not to go; the poor child had had a great draught of delight the day before, and she was aching and sickening for more, and longing with a passion of longing which is only known to very young people—she looked quite worn and pale through her tears.

“Rub up your shoebuckles—that will distract you,” said the old lady, kindly. “They are worth a great deal of money, though they are only paste; and if you peep in my room you will find a little pair of slippers to wear them with. I hope they will fit. I could hardly get any small enough for you.” They were the loveliest little white satin slippers, with satin heels, all embroidered with glass beads; but small as they were, they were a little loose, only Ella took care not to say so, as she tied them on.

We all know what is coming, though little Ella had no idea of it. The ball was at Guildhall, one of the grandest and gayest that ever was given in the city of London. It was in honour of the beautiful young Princess, who had just landed on our shores. Princes, ambassadors, nobles, stars, orders and garters and decorations, were to be present; all the grandest, gayest, richest, happiest people in the country, all the most beautiful ladies and jewels and flowers, were to be there to do homage to the peerless young bride. The Ashfords had no sooner started, than Lady Jane, who had been very mysterious all day, and never told any one that she had been to the city to procure two enormous golden tickets which were up in her bedroom, now came, smiling very benevolently, into the drawing-room. Little Ella was standing out in the balcony with her pale face and all her hair tumbling down her back. She had been too busy to put

it up; and now she was only thinking of the ball, and picturing the dear little ugly disappointed face of Prince Richardson, when he should look about everywhere for her in vain—while she was standing hopelessly gazing after the receding carriage.

"Well, my dear, have you rubbed up the shoebuckles? That is right," said the old lady. "Now come quick into my room and see some of my conjuring."

Conjuring! It was the most beautiful white net dress, frothed and frothed up to the waist, and looped up with long grasses. The conjuring was her own dear old pearl necklace with the diamond clasp and a diamond star for her hair. It was a bunch of grasses and delicate white azalias for a headdress, and over all the froth a great veil of flowing white net. The child opened her violet eyes, gasped, screamed, and began dancing about the room like a mad thing, jumping, bounding, clapping her hands, all so softly and gaily, and yet so lightly, in such an ecstasy of delight, that Lady Jane felt she was more than rewarded.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Ah! there she is at last!" cried Mr. Richardson, who was turning carefully round and round with the energetic Lisette.

"What do you mean?" said Lisette.

Can you fancy her amazement when she looked round and saw Ella appearing in her snow and sunlight dress, looking so beautiful that everybody turned to wonder at her, and to admire? As for Ella, she saw no one, nothing; she was looking up and down, and right and left, for the kind little pale plain face which she wanted.

"Excuse me one minute, Miss Lisette," said Mr. Richardson, leaving poor Lisette planted in the middle of the room, and rushing forward.

"Are you engaged," Ella heard a breathless voice saying in her ear, "for the next three, six, twenty dances? I am so delighted you have come! I thought you were never coming."

Julia had no partner at all, and was standing close by the entrance with her mother. They were both astounded at the apparition. Mrs. Ashford came forward to make sure that her eyes were not deceiving her. Could it be—? yes—no,—yes, it was Ella. She flicked her fan indignantly into an alderman's eye, and looked so fierce, that the child began to tremble.

"Please forgive me, mamma," said Ella, piteously.

"Forgive you! never," said Mrs. Ashford, indignant. "What does all this mean, pray?" she continued. "Lady Jane, I really must ——" and then she stopped, partly because she was so angry she could scarcely speak, and partly because she could not afford to quarrel with Lady Jane until the season was over.

"You really *must* forgive me, dear Lydia," said Lady Jane. "She wanted to come so much, I could not resist bringing her."

Weber's inspiring last waltz was being played; the people and music went waving to and fro like the waves of the sea, sudden sharp notes of exceeding sweetness sounded, and at the sound the figures all swayed in



harmony. The feet kept unseen measure to the music; the harmonious rhythm thrilled and controlled them all. The music was like an enchantment, which kept them moving and swaying in circles and in delightful subjection. Lassitude, sadness, disappointment, Ella's alarm, all melted away for the time; pulses beat, and the dancers seesawed to the measure.

All that evening young Richardson danced with Ella and with no one else: they scarcely knew how the time went. It was a fairy world: they were flying and swimming in melody—the fairy hours went by to music, in light, in delightful companionship. Ella did not care for Mrs. Ashford's darkening looks, for anything that might happen: she was so happy in the moment, she almost forgot to look for Lady Jane's sympathetic glance.

"You must meet me in the ladies' cloak-room punctually at half-past eleven," her patroness had whispered to her. "I cannot keep Raton, with his bad cough, out after twelve o'clock. Mind you are punctual, for I have promised not to keep him waiting."

"Yes, yes, dear Lady Jane," said Ella, and away she danced again to the music. And time went on, and Julia had no partners; and Colonel Ashford came up to his wife, saying,—“I'm so glad you arranged for Ella too,” he said. “How nice she is looking. What is the matter with Julia; why don't she dance?” Tumty, tumty, tumty, went the instruments. And meanwhile Mr. Richardson was saying,—“Your dancing puts me in mind of a fairy I once saw in a field at Cliffe long ago. Nobody would ever believe me, but I did see one.”

“A fairy—what was she like?” asked Ella.

“She was very like you,” said Mr. Richardson, laughing. “I do believe it *was* you, and that was the time when I saw you before.”

“No, it was not,” said Ella, blushing, and feeling she ought to confess. “I will tell you,” she said, “if you will promise to dance *one* more dance with me, after you know.—Only one.”

“Then you, too, remember,” he cried, eagerly. “One more dance?—twenty—for ever and ever. Ah, you must know, you must guess the feeling in my heart. . . .”

“Listen first,” said Ella, trembling very much and waltzing on very slowly. “It was only the other day——” The clock struck three-quarters.

“Ella, I am going,” said Lady Jane, tapping her on the shoulder. “Come along, my dear——”

“One word!” cried Richardson, eagerly.

“You can stay with your mother if you like,” the old lady went on, preoccupied—she was thinking of her coachman's ire—“but I advise you to come with me.”

“Oh, pray, pray stay!” said young Richardson; “where is your mother? Let me go and ask her?”

“You had better go yourself, Ella,” said old Lady Jane. “Will you give me your arm to the door, Mr. Richardson?”

Ella went up to Mrs. Ashford—she was bold with happiness to-night—

and made her request. "Stay with me? certainly not, it is quite out of the question. You do me great honour," said the lady, laughing sarcastically. "Lady Jane brought you, Lady Jane must take you back," said the stepmother. "Follow your chaperone if you please, I have no room for you in my brougham. Go directly, Miss!" said Mrs. Ashford, so savagely that the poor child was quite frightened and set off running after the other two. She would have caught them up, but at that instant Lisette—who had at last secured a partner—came waltzing up in such a violent, angry way, that she bumped right up against the little flying maiden and nearly knocked her down. Ella gave a low cry of pain: they had trodden on her foot roughly—they had wounded her; her little satin slipper had come off. Poor Ella stooped and tried to pull at the slipper, but other couples came surging up, and she was alone, and frightened, and obliged to shuffle a little way out of the crowd before she could get it on. The poor little frightened thing thought she never should get through the crowd. She made the best of her way to the cloak-room: it seemed to her as if she had been hours getting there. At last she reached it, only to see, to her dismay, as she went in at one door the other two going out of another a long way off! She called, but they did not hear her, and at the same moment St. Paul's great clock began slowly to strike twelve. "My cloak, my cloak, anything, please," she cried in great agitation and anxiety; and a stupid, bewildered maid hastily threw a shabby old shawl over her shoulders—it belonged to some assistant in the place. Little Ella, more and more frightened, pulled it up as she hurried along the blocked passages and corridors all lined with red and thronged with people. They all stared at her in surprise as she flew along. Presently her net tunic caught in a doorway and tore into a long ragged shred which trailed after her. In her agitation her comb fell out of her hair—she looked all scared and frightened—nobody would have recognized the beautiful triumphal princess of half an hour before. She heard the linkmen calling, "Peppercorne's carriage stops the way!" and she hurried faster and faster down the endless passages and steps, and at last, just as she got to the doorway—O horror! she saw the carriage and outriders going gleaming off in the moonlight, while every thing else looked black, dark, and terrible.

"Stop, stop, please stop!" cried little Ella, rushing out into the street through the amazed footmen and linkmen. "Stop! stop!" she cried, flying past Richardson himself, who could hardly believe his eyes. Raton only whipped his horses, and Ella saw them disappearing into gloom in the distance in a sort of agony of despair. She was excited beyond measure, and exaggerated all her feelings. What was to be done? Go back?—that was impossible; walk home?—she did not know her way. Was it fancy?—was not somebody following her? She felt quite desperate in the moonlight and darkness. At that instant it seemed to her like a fairy chariot coming to her rescue, when a cabman, who was slowly passing, stopped and said, "Cab, mum?"

"Yes! oh, yes! To Onslow Square," cried Ella, jumping in and shutting the door in delight and relief. She drove off just as the bewildered little Richardson, who had followed her, reached the spot. He came up in time only to see the cab drive off, and to pick up something which was lying shining on the pavement. It was one of the diamond buckles which had fallen from her shoe as she jumped in. This little diamond buckle might, perhaps, have led to her identification if young Richardson had not taken the precaution of ascertaining from old Lady Jane, Ella's name and address.

He sent a servant next morning with a little parcel and a note to inquire whether one of the ladies had lost what was enclosed, and whether Colonel Ashford would see him at one o'clock on business.

"Dear me, what a pretty little buckle!" said Lisette, trying it on her large flat foot. "It looks very nice, don't it, Julia? I think I guess—don't you?—what he is coming for? I shall say 'No.'"

"It's too small for you. It would do better for me," said Julia, contemplating her own long slipper, embellished with the diamonds. "It is not ours. We must send it back, I suppose."

"A shoebuckle," said Ella, coming in from the kitchen, where she had been superintending preserves in her little brown frock. "Let me see it. Oh, how glad I am; it is mine. Look here!" and she pulled the fellow out of her pocket. "Lady Jane gave them to me."

And so the prince arrived before luncheon, and was closeted with Colonel Ashford, who gladly gave his consent to what he wanted. And when Mrs. Ashford began to explain things to him, as was her way, he did not listen to a single word she said. He was so absorbed wondering when Ella was coming into the room. He thought once he heard a little rustle on the stairs outside, and he jumped up and rushed to the door. It was Ella, sure enough, in her shabby little gown. Then he knew where and when he had seen her before.

"Ella, why did you run away from me last night?" he said. "You see I have followed you after all."

They were so good, so happy, so devoted to one another, that even Lisette and Julia relented. Dear little couple; good luck go with them, happiness, content, and plenty. There was something quite touching in their youth, tenderness, and simplicity, and as they drove off in their carriage for the honeymoon, Lady Jane flung the very identical satin slipper after them which Ella should have lost at the ball.

---

## The National Portrait Exhibition.

---

THE object of the present paper is that it may serve as a familiar guide or companion to the fine Exhibition of National Portraits now on view at South Kensington. There is, of course, a catalogue of those portraits; and considering the range and difficulty of the subject, it is very creditably executed. But they are 1,030 in number to begin with, which confines the compilers of the catalogue within the narrowest possible limits. And, in the second place, the exhibition is of a nature too peculiar to be a proper subject for ordinary catalogue treatment. The mass of the pictures composing it are not interesting as works of art, but as illustrations of history; and their interest varies so prodigiously in degree on this account, that some deserve as many pages as others do lines of commentary. Our duty would therefore seem to be to select from the whole body those works which are most worthy a visitor's attention; indicating great artistic merit where it is generally allowed to exist by experts in those matters; but mainly remembering that portraiture is a kind of biography, and that the people here portrayed have, on the whole, been the leaders of English life, and ought to be remembered with some familiarity. But before beginning the task as thus conceived by us, a few words must be given to the history of the undertaking. The suggestion of it came from the Earl of Derby, whose powerful influence has mainly contributed to its success; and the collection has been formed under the superintendence of Mr. Samuel Redgrave, by Mr. Soden Smith, the Rev. James Beck, and Mr. R. F. Sketchley, who has acted as secretary. Most of the great houses of England, from Windsor downwards, such as Althorp, Longleat, Knowsley, Chatsworth, &c., have furnished portraits, and their example has been followed by colleges, corporations, and the halls of country squires. In fact, there has been a good creaming of our English portrait galleries; not a final one, for more yet remains, and must be made use of next year; but still one which gives a fair representation of our English portraits down to 1688. Next year, those of later dates come on. But it is also intended, we are glad to learn, that a second creaming shall take place, before then, of the earlier times; and now that the country is getting widely informed about the whole affair, treasures will come to light the existence of which is hardly yet suspected. Only the other day we learned by accident that an old Yorkshire family possesses a complete or nearly complete series of the famous Whartons down to the eccentric duke, immortalized by Pope, who died at Tarragona in 1731. But their possessor, it seems, never knew that any such project as that of the Exhibition was in the wind. The search for

future materials must be more minute than it has been hitherto; and it would be well if those who have old portraits of any kind in their possession would put themselves in communication with the South Kensington authorities.

After this brief preamble, let us commence our ciceroneship by advising the reader to do his work chronologically. For this purpose, he ascends the stairs instead of entering the gallery immediately before him, and finds himself in the Eastern Corridor amongst the old potentates of the Plantagenet reigns. Portraiture, he sees at once, is a thing of comparatively modern date in England. There are only a few portraits of very ancient times, and of these, some are trashy fictions, many are of artificial origin, and nearly all are of uncertain date and authorship. The first class is represented by a "Rosamond Clifford" (No. 1), purely imaginary; and by a "Sir William Wallace" (No. 2), in a tartan scarf, evidently drawn from some Argyleshire cattle-lifter under sentence of death at Glasgow about the period of the Union. There is a significance in *this* imposture which illustrates the whole subject of portrait-manufacture. To put Wallace in tartan could only have been an idea originating in modern times. He was a Lowland gentleman of English descent, his name "Waleys" being one which occurs among English barons and lord mayors of his century, and which first appears in the chartulary of Paisley along with the founders of the house of Stewart whom the Waleyses evidently accompanied to Renfrewshire from Shropshire. But there is a fictitious portraiture which belongs to art, as well as a fictitious portraiture which only belongs to fable. During the middle ages, our herald-painters and illuminators of MSS. were in the habit of making representations of their heroes or patrons; and the effigies on tombs and church-windows were certainly intended to be likenesses as much as the heads on classical or on modern coins. When these came to be used during the revival of art, as models from which to make larger portraits, the result was a portraiture—often quaint enough indeed—but by no means contemptible or untrustworthy. Chaucer was painted in miniature in old MSS.; and down to the last century a picture of him was visible on his tomb at Westminster. If, then, the two "Chaucers" in the Exhibition (Nos. 8 and 9) are not taken from life, as is certain enough, there is no reason to doubt their being like life. And they both represent the poet as a man of sensibility and intellect, though with all the gravity of expression which belongs to early schools of art. The author of the *Canterbury Tales* was a humourist as decidedly as a poet; but the power of giving the familiar, comic, or everyday view of a face belongs to the later ages of art rather than to the first ones. The "Henry IV." (No. 13, compare No. 10) remained long at Hampton Court, Herefordshire, which was built by a knight in Henry's service, who married a Fitzalan related to the king. It has thus an excellent pedigree, and was no doubt copied in large from a miniature illumination. The "John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury" (No. 19), makes

the old warrior, who is in a tabard, look like a playing-card. This portrait, which is in oil upon panel, was discovered by Pennant at Canons-Ashby, the seat of Lord Northampton, whose descendant, the Marquis, has lent it to the Exhibition. It is of the age of Henry VI., and a duplicate of it, which used to hang near the earl's tomb in old St. Paul's, was brought to the Herald's College after the fire of London. The tabard recalls a fine scene which old writers tell us took place when—

that great Alcides of the field,  
Valiant John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury,

lay dead upon the field of Chastillon. His herald found the body of the aged fighting-man,—he was eighty years old, and had been victorious in forty pitched battles and skirmishes,—and kissing it, broke out into “these compassionate and dutiful expressions,”—“Alas, it is you! I pray God pardon all your misdoings. I have been your officer of arms forty years or more, 'tis time I should surrender it to you.” And, “while the tears trickled plentifully down his face,” goes on the account, “he disrobed himself of his coat-of-arms, and flung it over his master's body.” Another portrait taken from life in this antique second-hand way is that of “Sir Thomas Lyttelton” (No. 36), Lord Lyttelton's ancestor, which was evidently done some generations after the famous old judge's time, probably from portraits in the windows of Frankley or Halesowen churches. The “Jane Shores” (Nos. 33, 34, 35), disappoint one as far as beauty is concerned. But the Eton College portrait (No. 34) deserves attention on the ground pointed out by Horace Walpole,—that her confessor was provost of Eton, and received through her intercession some lands of which the college had been despoiled. The pictures thus specified are all good, or, at lowest, curious samples of the old feudal *retrospective* portraiture, as we may call it. But there are two works in the Eastern Corridor of greater authority and higher merit than any of them. These are “Edward Grimston” (No. 17) and “Sir John Donne and Lady Donne” (No. 18). The first is a portrait by Petrus Christus, a pupil of Van Eyck, of an ancestor of Lord Verulam's, who was employed in the Low Countries in the fifteenth century. It is executed with the greatest power and truthfulness, and has the additional and unique interest, as far as we can see, of being the earliest portrait directly from life, on that scale, in the whole Exhibition. This is the more remarkable because very little is known about the Grimston family to the world at large, by whom they have been chiefly heard of as holding the title and possessing the estate once belonging to Bacon. The “Sir John and Lady Donne” is a noble religious picture by Van Eyck, in which the knight and his lady are kneeling before the Virgin and Child. Such pictures were presented by men of influence to religious houses in the middle ages, and the introduction into them of the patrons was a kind of return for their generosity. This one has the true realism and deep thoughtful sentiment of the old Christian schools. Like the “Edward Grimston,” its interest



is entirely different from that of the vast majority of the works in the Exhibition. Its interest is wholly in the painter, and not in the subject; whereas most of the portraits are valuable for the subject; and only a few are at once great in subject and in execution.

On leaving the Eastern Corridor, we find ourselves in the Eastern Gallery, which looks pleasantly out on the Horticultural Gardens, and is divided into nine bays or compartments, devoted to the men and women of the Tudor reigns. Almost the first portrait that meets the eye here—that of “Thomas Stanley, first Earl of Derby” (No. 42)—suggests the uncertainty of all early works of the kind. Not only is the costume that of a later date, but the earl himself is the “double” of a Duke of Somerset of Elizabeth’s reign, who figures elsewhere in the collection (No. 386). Nay more, his son, Lord Strange (No. 69), and his grandson, the second earl (No. 70), have a similar look of manufacture about them. This remark does not apply to the illustrious second wife of the first earl—Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby—a connection, by the way, which makes a certain confusion between Stanley and Beaufort portraits in some degree intelligible. Lord Derby’s portrait of that lady (No. 48) essentially resembles the one sent by St. John’s College, Cambridge (No. 47), of which she was a foundress. Near her hangs “Edward Stafford, third Duke of Buckingham” (No. 44, and see No. 71). This is the Buckingham of Shakspeare’s *Henry VIII.*, who says of Wolsey,—

This butcher’s cur is venom-mouth’d, and I  
Have not the power to muzzle him ;

and whose death on the scaffold was an incident in that war between the old nobility and the new, which is a salient feature of our aristocratic history under the Tudors. His daughter Elizabeth married the third Duke of Norfolk—by whom she was infamously treated—and was the mother of the illustrious Earl of Surrey—the flower of the house of Howard—of whose undutifulness, we regret to say, she made heavy complaints. But we are giving the nobles precedence over the sovereigns, which will never do. Let us observe first, then, that of all the Henry VIII.’s,—burly, florid, vigorous, and *tant soit peu* brutal as they are,—the best is No. 99, from Warwick Castle. Let us next call attention to the fine picture of “Henry VII. and Ferdinand of Arragon” (No. 54), and to the exquisite Mabuse, called (it is thought erroneously) “The Children of Henry VII.” (No. 58), but which, under any other name, would be equally a rose of art. There is also a fine comely full-length of “Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scotland” (No. 53), whose marriage with James IV. of that kingdom ultimately brought the English crown to the Stuarts; who was at once a grandmother of Mary and of Darnley; and who is the link which connects her Majesty with all the older sovereigns of England. Queen Margaret’s sister, the Princess Mary, is also represented (Nos. 76 and 80), with her pleasant, jolly-looking husband, “Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk,” whom Henry evidently

pardoned all the more readily because he recognized in his handsomeness, his animalism, and his high spirit, a nature kindred to his own.

The presiding genius of this part of the exhibition is the great Hans Holbein—the Swiss whose genius, like the Rhine, took its rise among the Alps and flowed northwards—the friend of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, one of the earliest, truest, wisest, and most finished of all portrait-painters. Recent investigation has shown that Holbein died sooner than used to be thought, and this has thrown doubt on several portraits formerly honoured by bearing his name. But there are enough unquestioned specimens of him at South Kensington to give the visitor a thorough taste of his genius. We may instance, particularly, the “Sir William Butts” (No. 110) and “Lady Butts” (No. 115). Butts, who was physician to Henry the Eighth, has had the curious luck of being immortalized at once by Holbein and by Shakspeare :

By holy Mary, Butts, there's knavery,

says Shakspeare's Henry when Butts shows him from the window Cranmer kept waiting among lackies outside the Council Chamber by the Lords of Council. Holbein, however, has done the wife even better than the husband, or the picture has been luckier in its history ; for a more characteristic human head was hardly ever put upon canvas. The “Sir Richard Southwells,” also (Nos. 108 and 112) are very good, and make one think of the man who accused Surrey of treason, and whom Surrey offered to fight “in his shirt.” Still more interesting, because the painter's genius is employed on a higher man, is Holbein's “William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury” (No. 86), a fine, honest, tender old face, rugged but gentle, alive with intellectual light, and soft with moral patience. Warham held Canterbury immediately before Cranmer, and was one of the Conservative Reformers, like Erasmus and More, who hoped that the Church might be improved, chiefly through literature, without disruption of its unity and without social convulsion. Of hardly any man does the great and delightful Sage of Rotterdam speak with heartier warmth than of Warham. And we are now in the thick of Erasmus's friends. We have not, indeed, reached as yet the More family, one of the glories of the whole Exhibition. There is, however, an excellent “Linacre” (No. 96), attributed either to Holbein or Quintin Matsys, and an inferior Dean Colet (No. 60), which makes no such pretensions. The poet Sir Thomas Wyatt, Surrey's friend, one of the many men of that age who combined the pursuit of letters with active life, certainly sat to Holbein, as his contemporary, the antiquary Leland, affirms. But the painter's hand is not visible in the poet's head as we have it from the Bodleian (No. 68), though on the whole we prefer the Bodleian Wyatt to the one sent by Mr. John Bruce (No. 98). The family portraits of our great families begin to be authentic as the sixteenth century advances, though the artists are often unknown. The “Sir William Cavendish” (No. 81) of this epoch is significantly like the shrewd persevering loyal Gentleman-

Usher of Wolsey, the real founder of the House of Devonshire. His fidelity to Wolsey served him with the King after Wolsey's fall. Priors and abbeyes were "dissolved" into a stream of wealth for him and his posterity. And he married, for his third wife, a widow fair and rich, and still cleverer than she was fair and rich,—the notorious Elizabeth Hardwick, commonly called "Bess of Hardwick"—an alliance which first planted the Cavendishes in Derbyshire. Other characteristic faces of the founders of our modern aristocracy are those of "Sir William Petre" (No. 128), with his sagacious look and firm mouth; of "William, first Lord Paget" (No. 159), long-nosed, and acute; of "Sir John Thynne" (No. 161), the steward of the Protector Somerset, sharp, pushing, and bold. On all these men, and such as they, the Seymours included, "the gentle Surrey," as Sir Walter Scott calls him, looked with distrust and hauteur. And this feeling of Surrey's, expressed in such sayings as that "they loved no ancient nobility," and that "when the King died they should smart for it," did no little towards bringing that brilliant head of his to the block. There are three portraits of the Earl of Surrey in the Exhibition, of which far the most striking is the brilliant full-length contributed by the Countess Delawarr (No. 121), and which, if it had no other claim than the having come down from the Sackvilles, who were related to Surrey's family, would be of great importance. But its splendid qualities as a picture attract every artist, and it is difficult to gaze on the stately figure, and the sad, proud, intellectual look of the face, without feeling that so once stood before his contemporaries the most famous of the Howards in the sixteenth century. He leans against a column bearing a motto which he had chosen, *sat superest*, and to his right is the shield of his ancestor Thomas Plantagenet of Brotherton, the carrying of which was one of the offences that cost him his head. This fine portrait is ascribed to Holbein. But it seems more likely to be the work of Guillim Street, though even this is doubtful, and there are authorities who think it due to some painter of Italy. The chronology in this, as in other cases, does not suit the Holbein theory. For instance, "Edward Stanley, third Earl of Derby" (No. 153), is called a Holbein likewise. But if Holbein died in 1543, as now seems certain, that Lord Derby was many years younger at the time than the portrait makes him. One portrait good enough to be classed with genuine Holbeins, though the head has been tampered with, is "Sir William Sidney" (No. 141), the grandfather of Sir Philip. This fine amiable-looking gentleman leads off the Sidneys in the Exhibition, of whom there are no less than thirteen. The family likeness is curiously visible in many of them, and a pleasant type of face it is, always benignant, intellectual, and refined.

Of all the pictures, however, bearing the name of Holbein, that which carries off the palm in the multitude of associations,—historic, domestic, literary,—gathering round it, is the "Sir Thomas More and his Family" (No. 163), belonging to Mr. Charles Winn, of Yorkshire. That Holbein painted a family group of the Mores is certain; for we have two letters

of Erasmus still extant in which he mentions having seen a picture of the kind. In the first of these, dated Friburg, 5th September, 1529, Erasmus says to Sir Thomas :—"I hope it may be allowed me yet once in life to see those most dear friends, whom in the picture which Holbein showed me I have looked at with the greatest pleasure of mind." In the second, written next day, and addressed to Sir Thomas's daughter, Mrs. Margaret Roper, he dwells on the work at greater length :—"I can hardly tell you," the old scholar writes, "what pleasure I felt when the painter, Holbein, showed me that whole family so happily brought out, that if I had been present I could not have seen much more. Frequently am I wont to desire that office before my fatal day, it may be my lot to see that most dear company to which I owe a good part, whether of my fortune or my glory such as it is, and owe to no mortals more willingly. Of this wish, the ingenious hand of the painter has given me no little portion. I recognized them all, but no one more readily than you. I seemed to myself to see shining through its most beautiful dwelling the much more beautiful mind." And he adds that he had kissed the image of Margaret Roper's mother. Now, that the portrait here spoken of was such a portrait of the whole household as the one before us in the Exhibition, is abundantly plain from Erasmus's words. They are all there,—grandfather, father, son, daughters ; and Margaret Roper is comely enough to justify the good old scholar's compliments. The household clock is ticking on the wall ; the family fool is standing in the background ; flowers from the garden perfume the air ; and the whole atmosphere is redolent of homely domestic life and peace. But how much of the work as it at present stands came from the hand of Holbein is not easy to determine. Walpole thought that he made the design, and that it was executed in large by journeymen ; and he enumerated six pieces extant on the subject, one of the three largest of which is the one of which we are speaking. Certain it is, that Mr. Winn's picture has pedigree in its favour, for it can be traced to the Ropers already mentioned, one of whom Margaret More married. Its *general* authenticity is thus indisputable ; and if we miss Holbein in the details, we are sure that his genius is there as the animating spirit of the whole.

As we approach the period of the Elizabethans, a few admirable portraits by the great painter Sir Antonio More, who came to England with Philip the Second, present themselves for particular study. Such are his portrait of himself (No. 186), a noble work ; and that of "Walter Devereux, first Earl of Essex" (No. 263), whose keen wise eye and arch expression have an irresistible look of life. This able and long-descended nobleman was one of the seven men whom Elizabeth made peers in her fifty years' reign. It is believed that he was poisoned at the instigation of Leicester, who married his widow, Lettice Knollys. He was the father of Elizabeth's favourite, in whose face a family likeness is discernible (No. 253). But it is a pity that we have no portraits either of his wife Lettice, or of his daughter Penelope, whose beauty was renowned.

Another highly remarkable work by Sir Antonio More is "Queen Elizabeth as Princess" (No. 271). This is exquisitely painted, and represents the Queen as a young woman, eminently intelligent, and by no means bad-looking. Few of our readers are probably so confident that Elizabeth was beautiful as Mr. Kingsley. But the general impression to the contrary which somehow prevails now, receives no confirmation from the many portraits of her in this Exhibition, taken in the lump. Whether as a girl with a book in her hand in the very fine picture (it has been severely scrubbed by the way) from St. James's Palace (No. 247); or in early womanhood as More presents her; or blazing in gems, from the brilliant pencil of Zuccherò (No. 267), in middle life, she cannot fairly be called plain, and her face has always intellect and character. What is noticeable, too, is that through all Elizabeth's portraits there is a general similarity of type visible; whereas most of those of Mary Queen of Scots are neither like each other, nor like anything that the sixteenth century writers tell us about her. In scarcely two out of thirteen, do we see the *belle créature* of Joseph Scaliger; the

*Nympha inter pulchras pulcherrima Neptuninas,  
Nympha Caledoniæ gloria magna tuæ,*

of George Buchanan; or her whom Ronsard sang of as,—

*Une Roïne si belle,  
Belle en perfection : car toute la beauté  
Qui est, et qui sera, et a jamais esté  
Pres de la sienne est laide.*

The great men of Elizabeth's great reign are fairly represented in the Eastern Gallery. The sagacious Cecil and his son are there (Nos. 242, 245, 259). Sir Nicholas Bacon's solid brow and powerful jowl suggest a man equally great at the council-board and the dinner-table (No. 223). No quite worthy Raleigh appears, indeed, but there is a far-travelled penetrating look about one portrait of him (No. 250), which induces us to give it the preference. "Thomas Sackville, Earl of Dorset," best known in literature as Lord Buckhurst, and ancestor of many Sackvilles distinguished in their times, figures to advantage on the canvas of Garrard (No. 255). The Admiralty, too, have sent an impressive full length of that fine old grandee, Charles Howard Earl of Nottingham, the conqueror of the Armada (No. 357). For some reason or other, however, the sailors of this age have not received justice at the hands of its artists. Neither Drake (Nos. 346, 361) nor Frobisher (Nos. 351, 395) satisfy the imagination. How cheerfully would we exchange for really great portraits of such men, the criminals like Leicester, who seem to have been painted on all hands, or the obscure big-wigs who were painted only because they had money to pay for it, and whose names, read in a catalogue one day, are forgotten the next! Of the many kinds of moral interest about a portrait gallery—especially a portrait gallery of a nation, as this one at Kensington is—not the

least is the tone of irony visible in the way in which fortune arranges whose portraits shall survive. It runs through all departments of life. There are more Cecils, Grimstones, and Wallops, than Talbots, Cliffords, and Veres. The grave-digger who dug Mary Queen of Scots' grave is there,—and nobody can answer for the likenesses of Shakspeare. The only portrait of Edmund Spenser (No. 336) is without a history. The only two of Ben Jonson (Nos. 332, 333) are hardly like each other. And we look in vain on the walls for Marlow, Kyd, Webster, Peele, or Nash.

We must not, however, grudge the Elizabethan "swell" his comparative prosperity, because he was nearly always a "swell," and something more. He was a lily of the valley, but he knew how to toil and spin. Sometimes, like "George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland" (No. 397), he made long sea-voyages for England's glory at his own expense. Sometimes, like Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford (whom we regret to find absent), he wrote poems which the world has not allowed to die. He fought with Sidney at Zutphen; with Devereux at Cadiz; and poured out—freely as the wine flowed in his castle—his old blood on the American sand. A certain elevation of sentiment marks these men, which even the cavaliers did not possess in the same delicacy of bloom, and which was totally wanting to the witty rakes of the Second Charles. "Fulke Greville, first Lord Brooke" (No. 299,) wrote himself down in his epitaph, to be read to this day under his rotting banner in the church of St. Mary at Warwick,—

Servant to Queen Elizabeth,  
Counsellor to King James,  
And friend to Sir Philip Sydney;

his life of whom is still worth reading. And Philip himself is probably looked at in the various excellent portraits of him which the Exhibition contains, with as genial an admiration as any man under its roof. Our own favourite is the Warwick Castle Sidney (No. 274), which has come down to Lord Brooke from the biographer just mentioned. Near it hangs his loved and honoured sister (No. 284), on whom Ben Jonson wrote the famous lines which Simonides never surpassed, and which, quoted a thousand times, shall here be quoted for the thousandth and first:—

Underneath this sable hearse,  
Lies the subject of all verse,  
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,  
Death, ere thou hast slain another  
Learn'd, and fair, and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

It is customary to speak of this sweet little poem as an "epitaph," and the catalogue, following this custom, adds truly that it was never engraved on Lady Pembroke's monument. But the truth is that it is not an epitaph,



but an *epicedion*;—not an inscription for a tomb, but a dirge, or funeral-song, for a funeral. The popular misquotation "*marble hearse*" has done much to keep up the popular error on the subject. Assuredly, the beauties of that generation never were without a *vates sacer*. Not far from "Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke," is the pleasant good-natured face of "Alice Spencer, Countess of Derby" (No. 288), who, celebrated in her youth by the poet Spenser as "*sweet Amaryllis*," had a mask—the "*Arcades*"—dedicated to her in her old age by Milton. She was the wife of "Ferdinando, fifth Earl of Derby" (Nos. 286, 289), whose portraits—not otherwise remarkable—have a decided air of reality about them. That of his father, "Henry, the fourth Earl of Derby" (No. 287), gives a capital notion of the higher patricians of that day, whose position was always a responsible, and often a perilous one. But the Exhibition does not contain a single head of the Stanleys from whom the present Earl of Derby descends—the junior branch who succeeded to the earldom in 1736—and we cannot expect to trace vivid resemblances between living men and the faces of those from whose fourth cousins they are sixth or seventh in descent. Other members of houses now patrician, worth looking at in this far end of the Eastern Gallery, are "Sir John Spencer" (No. 371), father of the first peer; and (in the Eastern Corridor) "Sir Oliver Wallop" (No. 385), Lord Portsmouth's ancestor—a good, round-headed fighting man, with no lack of character about him.

On leaving the East Central Corridor at the end of what may be called the Tudor Gallery, we ascend the stairs, and passing through the Naval Museum, come to a large square space—the Centre—in which the reign of James the First begins. Before we enter it, three portraits face us. That in the middle—the tall figure in black doublet and hose—is Lord William Howard, the "*Belted Will*" of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*:—

His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen felt,  
Hung in a broad and studded belt;  
Hence, in rude phrase, the borderers still  
Called Noble Howard, Belted Will.

He was a younger son of Thomas, the fourth Duke of Norfolk (No. 268), who lost his head for his foolish political flirtation with Mary Queen of Scots, in 1572; and was thus a grandson of the "*gentle Surrey*," the common ancestor of all the great Howards—except the Effingham line who came off earlier—down to this day. "*Belted Will*" founded the Carlisle branch, endowing them with broad lands by his marriage with Elizabeth a co-heiress of the last Lord Dacre of Gillesland. The three heiresses of that great northern house all married Howards; and the male line of Dacre, reduced to poverty, and meeting no justice, died unhappy, some in exile, and some at home. Of course, there are no Dacres in the Exhibition, "*Elizabeth Lady Howard*" excepted (No. 429). On either side of the old Border chieftain hang a married couple whose history is

a romance. These are "Sir Robert Shirley" (No. 404), and "Lady Theresa," his wife (No. 406). Sir Robert was one of those adventurous travellers whose lives give so much of its picturesque colour to the age of Elizabeth. He was employed in Persia by the Shah, and brought home to the court of James the Persian lady—

Serene with argent-lidded eyes

Amorous—

whose pretty face is before us. In the Centre, round the corner, the first head which strikes the view is that of an old gentlewoman, and it is called "The Countess of Desmond," by Rembrandt. We all remember this Countess—

Who lived to the age of a hundred and ten,  
And died by a fall from a cherry-tree, then;  
What a frisky old girl!—

as Tom Moore sings. But this cannot be the old girl in question, or if it is, then it cannot be a Rembrandt. A very brilliant figure next attracts attention, "Sir Nathaniel Bacon," by himself (No. 411). He was the great Bacon's half-brother, and was an amateur of real genius for the art. He painted his wife, also, who is beside him (No. 415), and the work is a very clever one. Two portraits of Arabella Stuart are on the same wall, one of them (No. 422) probably—as Miss Cooper suggests,\*—that which was sent to Leicester when he wished to betroth the child whom he lost—the infant Lord Denbigh—to the child Arabella. The "Swinburne" in the corner (No. 426) was an ancestor of the young poet who is again making the old name familiar. But the leading figures of the Centre are King James, his family, and some of his court. James is here, as everywhere, intelligent-looking, but ignoble;—no sovereign and no gentleman;—reminding one much of Thackeray's saying in the *Book of Snobs* that he was "a snob and a Scotch snob—than which the world contains no more offensive creature." But the personal appearance of Prince Henry, the "Marcellus of the House of Stuart,"—

Ostendent terris hunc tantum fata, neque ultra  
Esse sinent—

is not unworthy a prince whose parts attracted Bacon, and his character, Raleigh. In Bacon's Latin eulogium, Henry's personal beauty is strongly insisted upon, and compared to that of his sister Elizabeth, whom he resembles, Bacon says, as much as a young man could resemble the conspicuous beauty of a virgin; "quam etiam, quantum potuit virilis forma ad eximiam virginalem pulchritudinem collata, referebat." He looks best, we think, in the Van Somer (No. 446), sent by Lord Craven, whose ancestor was in such close relations with Elizabeth of Bohemia. The "Queen of Hearts" is always stately and handsome

---

\* In her recent excellent and agreeable *Life of Arabella Stuart*.—(Hurst and Blackett.)

(No. 445). And handsomeness must also be assigned—it is his only good point—to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, of whom and his family there are beautiful pictures by Jansen and Honthorst (Nos. 432, 435). The favourites of Elizabeth had generally something about them besides good looks, even when, like Leicester, they were tainted with crime. Besides, if her favourites were foolish, her councillors were wise. But the creatures whom James raised out of the dust to the height of greatness—from motives as little respectable as those which made a Roman emperor love a handsome *libertus*—were allowed to dishonour by their folly the country which they robbed in their greed, and were, besides, insolent and licentious beyond all historical example. It is a relief to turn from them to the stout Roundheads and the gallant Cavaliers, the men of Clarendon and Vandyck. For what Holbein is to Erasmus, Vandyck is to Clarendon. The painter illustrates the writer, and the writer illustrates the painter. It was no mere fancy of Walpole's, but a solid and valuable observation that he made, when he compared the portraits of these two great men. They had both in a singular degree the power of bringing out individual character, and exhibiting it under its most noble and graceful aspects. Of Clarendon's politics we say nothing. But it will not be the worst result of the Portrait Exhibition if it induces people to read him a little more than has been the fashion lately; and to enjoy the charm of his stateliness, relieved by familiarity; his pomp, qualified by grace. He is the counterpart of Vandyck in a sister art; and just as among the Tudors we think of Erasmus when we look at Holbein, so we think of Clarendon when we look at Vandyck.

We first get into the Vandyck region on arriving at the West Central Corridor, which we reach by descending the stairs after quitting the Centre. Here, two excellent Vandycks immediately attract attention, that of the loyal and honourable "William, first Earl of Craven" (No. 460), and that of "Thomas, first Lord Arundell of Wardour" (No. 465), a good Continental soldier of the period, whom one immediately begins to think of as if one had *known* this portrait to be like. Here we pass into another gallery, the Western Gallery, and find ourselves among some of the ablest men of the early part of the seventeenth century. There is a good full-length of Bacon from Gorhambury (No. 468), but it is the Bacon of the world and the court rather than the Bacon of philosophy or letters, and is less pleasing than the fine statue of the sage in St. Michael's Church, St. Alban's; the face is cunning, and what the Scotch call "pawky," more than wise; and we miss in it the poetic element which flashes through all the philosopher's speculations, and which has such a mournful beauty in some of the opening sentences of his will. A "Lady Hobart" (No. 469), close by, is a fine earnest old lady's head of the period, and nobody will be disappointed either with Camden (Nos. 473, 490), or Wotton, for the face of the old diplomatist and poet is full of light (No. 496). The Earl of Pembroke who married "Sidney's sister,"

is in this part of the building (No. 492,) separated from the sweet-faced lady whose name keeps his alive, and throws over him a poetry that he does not deserve—for his divorce of his first wife. Katherine Grey was base, and we suspect that what his family saw to admire in Mary Sidney was less her personal worth than her Dudley connection. A lady not unlike Mary Sidney in some points of character is represented by a delightful portrait in this quarter—the Lucy Harington (No. 507), whom Ben Jonson addresses as—

Lucy, you brightness of our sphere, who are  
Life of the Muses' days, their morning star.

And another who made herself a name in the memoirs of the time stands with a quiet grace before us—Anne Clifford, the heiress of the Earls of Cumberland, one of whose husbands was Mary Sidney's son. It is a curious fact, however, that the women of England are worse represented in this collection than the men; and Anne Clifford, maugre her great descent, is insipid compared with such cavaliers as Vandyck's Earl of Cleveland (No. 542), and that burly old warrior, in yellow buff, Berkeley of Stratton (No. 546), whom we never look at without feeling that he must have emptied a flagon at some time or other with Dugald Dalgetty. Another almost typical cavalier—every inch a king and churchman—is Sir Bevil Granville (No. 563),—he who fell at Lansdown, and was so much loved through all the west country. It is strange to see these old worthies looking at us tranquilly, side by side with those whom they never met in life, except as mortal foes; and to turn from them to their enemies, the long-headed Lord Saye and Sele (No. 551), and the resolute bright-witted John Pym, one portrait of whom, Lord Tewnsend's (No. 609), we think thoroughly characteristic. If, in a general way, however, the men have the advantage over the women in these galleries, there are some brilliant female portraits, and in the neighbourhood where we now are that of Charlotte de la Tremouille (No. 554) is worthy of particular attention. It is a charming Rubens, full of life and spirit and grace. The young French patrician lady is still in her own land,—the siege of Latham and that darker scene at Bolton lie hid from her in the distant future,—and the sense and resolution which great trials are doomed to evoke, only appear as yet in the form of a happy, joyous, girlish force, suggestive of love and wit and song and dancing. The reader will find it interesting to compare this delightful Rubens of Charlotte de la Tremouille, when young, with the Vandyck which depicts her as the grave, matronly Countess of Derby (No. 694), and with a third picture (No. 696), in which she is in mourning for the honest lord,—true to her and to his king,—who died so bravely and yet so modestly on the scaffold. This is the Countess of Derby whom everybody remembers in *Peveril of the Peak*, and whose family,—one of the noblest in France, and sprung from the old sovereign counts of Poitou,—is still in existence.

In some degree this Rubens of "Lady Derby" will be a surprise, since the countess, though famous for her courage and sense, was never

much celebrated as a beauty. But the fair Venetia Digby, the wife of Sir Kenelm, a Stanley by birth, was as renowned in the generation with which we are now occupied as Penelope Devereux in the generation immediately preceding. Sir Kenelm was almost inordinately proud of her loveliness, and was most anxious through life to have it secured by art, for the admiration of posterity. Accordingly, we see her in the Exhibition, both living and dead. The picture of her after death (No. 570), represents her as if asleep; and we know from Ben Jonson's poem, that her being found dead in bed excited the imagination of her admirers—

Dare I profane, so irreligious be  
To greet or grieve her soft euthanasie,  
So sweetly taken to the court of blisse,  
As spirits had stolen her spirit in a kisse,  
From off her pillow and deluded bed,  
And left her lovely body unthought dead.

It is always pleasant to find the fine arts playing into each other's hands in this way; and of many instances of the kind in the Portrait Exhibition, not the least remarkable is afforded by this notable race of Digbys. The portliness and amplitude of Sir Kenelm (Nos. 575, 646) are hardly more impressive, even on the canvas of Vandyck, than in the verse of Jonson, who refers very distinctly to them—

In him all virtue is beheld in state;  
And he is built like some imperial room,  
For that to dwell in and be still at home.

The "imperial" size of the "room" is unmistakable, indeed, in No. 575; and one is tempted to think that it was a dining-room! The Lady Venetia is comely enough in the family group portraits, where her two little boys are delightfully done (No. 575). But her renowned loveliness is most visible in the allegorical picture of her (No. 653), where Cupids are holding a wreath of laurel over her head, and where her beauty is seen to have been of a fine type—not that of Rosalind and Amaryllis, but that of Beatrice and Portia. While on this chapter of seventeenth-century beauties, let us point out, as pretty and engaging, two ladies of families which made a great figure at that time. One is "Anne, Countess of Morton" (No. 571), who has all the voluptuous charms for which the Villierses were remarkable, and which came to their peculiar perfection in the "Duchess of Cleveland" of Lely (No. 851). The other is "Lady Dorothy Sidney, Countess of Sunderland," the "Sacharissa" of Waller, whose good looks are testified to by four portraits (Nos. 576, 662, 684, 773), though most people think them below her fame. There is a good Waller (No. 660) among the excellent pictures contributed by Mr. Fountaine, of Norfolk; but the Rousham Waller, it seems, could not be obtained. Beauties and wits go naturally together, so we may here say that, besides a good Waller, the Exhibition contains an agreeable Suckling (No. 682), and a remarkable Cowley (No. 757). We miss,

however, Cleiveland, who had the sharpest sting, and Herrick, who produced the sweetest honey, of all the Attic bees of the time; a time remarkable for the excellence of its light literature—which in poetic epigram, in wit winged with fancy, has never been outdone. The satirist of Anne's reign was a viper inside a bundle of dry sticks. The Caroline satirist was more Aristophanic, and shook his poisonous dew from the bells of flowers.

In an exhibition of this kind, the historical student feels that he is paying a visit to his illustrious friends among the dead. He turns naturally to those who, "having done what deserves to be written, or written what deserves to be read," have long filled a place in the spiritual which he desires to see them occupy in the bodily eye. It is a kind of introduction that he gets to men whom he has long desired to know. Thus, with what natural curiosity he turns to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, or Falkland "the virtuous and the just!" Lord Powis, who represents Lord Herbert of Cherbury, has sent two portraits of him, one an oval bust (No. 622), which we prefer to the full length (No. 628). This bust was probably executed in Italy. It has the look of Italian work, though not of the very best class. And we all know that Lord Herbert of Cherbury was in Italy, where he told a pretty nun, who sang sweetly, that, die when she might, she need not change either face or voice in becoming an angel. His own face is that of a man of brains and sensibility. But where is his younger brother, the poet, the holy George? Has the family which unites the honours of Clive with those of the most truly distinguished branch of the Herberts no likeness of *him*? As there are two Herberts of Cherbury, so there are two Lord Falklands. Our own preference is given to that sent by Lord Arundell of Wardour, where the kindly open expression finds its way to all hearts (No. 619). But the other has an earnest and tender look, almost equally fascinating on careful study (No. 658). Both of them bear out what Clarendon tells us of a certain "simplicity" which belonged to Falkland's look, and which was thought to show him to a disadvantage compared with some of his lordlier contemporaries of his class. He has the air of one, however, to be loved dead as he was loved living; and the eye turns tenderly to his pretty wife, Lettice Morrison, on the opposite wall (No. 596.) She was the sister of his bosom friend, Sir Henry Morrison, his friendship with whom Ben Jonson celebrated in an "Ode Pindaric." The little circle of scholars and wits which met at Falkland's house, Great Tew, near Oxford, is only partially represented at South Kensington. Chillingworth is not there, nor Hammond. We find, however, one of his most constant guests, Bishop Morley (No. 1004), who deserves remembrance, were it only for one admirable *bon mot*, so little hacknied that we must repeat it here. A country squire having asked him "what the Arminians held," he said they held all the best bishoprics and deaneries in the English Church.



After exhausting the Western Gallery and Corridors, our reader must retrace his steps, and descend to the Lower Western and Lower Eastern Galleries, on the ground floor. Exhibitions are of no politics. Most men of sense now agree with Coleridge, that in reading about our great Civil War we can respect both sides. And no modern Roundhead refuses to relish a Cavalier by Vandyck, any more than a modern Cavalier objects to a Roundhead by Cooper or Walker. Pleasant and profitable hours may be spent in contemplating both. The crayon head of "Cromwell," by Cooper (No. 803), naturally takes the lead in interest over all other portraits of men of the Commonwealth. It is full of rugged life and moral concentration. There is an "Admiral Blake," too (No. 816), of Mr. Fountaine's, which is comparatively new to the general world, and exceeds in character, we think, the well-known Blake of Wadham (No. 818). "Cromwell's Mother" (No. 786,) has not the beauty on canvas which belongs to her in the miniatures. Ireton has been at last unfolded to the public gaze in his true image, having been long represented in portraiture by Sir John Minnes (No. 663). Among the grandest in this region, the beautiful little group of Howards in distemper (No. 712), attracts deserved admiration; as well as that of Algernon, tenth Earl of Northumberland, and his family (No. 719), where the child especially is one of the most agreeable creations of Vandyck. A delightful Vandyck, too, is his James Stuart, Duke of Richmond (No. 720), than whom Charles the First had no nobler kinsman or loyaller follower. The three little Sidneys (No. 780) are well worth looking at, for the young red-haired one holding the dog is the famous Algernon—a name which he took from his mother's family, the Percies. The Carew and Killigrew, from Windsor (No. 754), is an eminently splendid specimen of Vandyck; Killigrew, who faces the reader, being rendered with perfect grace and nobleness.

The Lower Eastern Gallery, which alone remains to be noticed, is the favourite part of the whole exhibition for the lovers of piquant gossip. Here are found the men and women of Charles the Second's time—of Pepys and Grammont, and the graver Evelyn. Bright eyes and bright sayings rule the hour, and the world is governed by kisses and epigrams. Pepys and Lely go together here, as Clarendon and Vandyck do in the gallery which we quitted last; or Holbein and Erasmus—Sir Antonio More and Shakspeare,—in the gallery with which we began. It is a world the "anecdote" of which is far better known than that of earlier worlds, however much less worth knowing, which in these matters does not count. Let us content ourselves with pointing out what is cleverest and pleasantest, for cleverness and pleasantness were the characteristic qualities of the period.

There are several Nell Gwyns, No. 841 being perhaps the prettiest, though the picture is terribly cracked. There is a delicious "Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland" (No. 851), a languishing houri of the true

Lely type; and another of her (No. 842) as "Minerva" (surely Venus would have been the more appropriate goddess?), hanging not far from the unlucky and ill-looking Catherine of Braganza (No. 837), from whom she drew many tears. The "Comtesse de Grammont" is pretty and characteristic (No. 844). The best Duchess of Portsmouth—that Louise de Querouaille whom our rude ancestors, as Macaulay says, called "Madam Carwell," is the Gascar (No. 845), and her boy, the Duke of Richmond's ancestor—from whom, too, Charles Fox was descended—is a very nice-looking lad, with much of his mother's face (No. 913). Lucy Walters is showy, and we fear a little brazen-looking (No. 839), while her son, the Duke of Monmouth, has little of Charles's distinctive look,—so little as to corroborate the views of those who thought his paternity doubtful (Nos. 836, 876, 1020). None of his portraits, however, are sent by the Duke of Buccleuch, who, more than anybody else, is interested in this small question of antiquarian detail. Those who care for this peculiar class of historical persons may be referred to "wanton Shrewsbury," a kinswoman of Lord Cardigan's, though the picture is only mediocre (No. 898). Eleanor Lady Byron's, also, is a sweetly pretty face (No. 866). The poet did not descend from this woman, but from another marriage. The philosophy of race, however, is left to shift for itself in the battle of artistic life. We have Barbara Villiers, but not the Villiers who was mother of the great Chatham. We have the profligate Wilmot, the second Earl of Rochester, but not his more worthy father. To be sure, many of us were agreeably disappointed in the features of this genial and certainly clever rake (No. 854). He looks a most innocent and hopeful youngster, and his head is painted with all the cleverness of the school then in vogue. There was no great power about the school of Lely, but a kind of refinement and ingenuity which has its own attraction. Lely never came so near Vandyck, as Vandyck in some of his best works, such as the "Carew and Killigrew" lately mentioned, came near Titian. In every age the portrait-painters and their sitters correspond to each other in a very notable way. You want a Holbein for an Erasmus, or a Vandyck for a Strafford; but a Lely does well enough for the noble friends and kinsfolk of a Lucy Walters or Moll Davis. The portraits of Charles the Second by no means bear out his character as "a merry monarch." On the contrary, he is, in some of the best of them, saturnine, and even sad. By an odd contradiction, the mistresses of his brother James are better-looking than tradition represents them to have been. The descendants of that king and Arabella Churchill (No. 1018) are still extant in the *noblesse* of France.

The more respectable men of Charles's age have not been overlooked. That stout old "tarpaulin," (to use one of the familiar words of the time,) Sir John Lawson, the admiral, is there (No. 847). He was one of the Commonwealth—who lived to become one of the Restoration—admirals, and died of wounds received in battle with the Dutch, having requested, before

his last fight, a small provision for his widow, about the payment of which Clarendon does not seem to have been so hopeful as could be wished. The old age of Hobbes is most effectively brought before us, especially in the portrait of the Duke of Devonshire (No. 954), with whose forefathers the philosopher lived and died. The All Souls' Jeremy Taylor (No. 962) is thought to be the best Jeremy Taylor extant: while the Kit-Cat Dryden, of Kneller, besides its intrinsic claims, is remarkable as having been derived by its present proprietor from Dryden's publisher, Tonson (No. 1000.) "His portraits," says Sir Walter Scott, "bespeak the look and features of genius; especially that in which he is drawn with his waving grey hairs." The grey hairs are waving in this portrait, to which Sir Walter evidently alluded. It would be well if the whole series of portraits of which it is one, could be obtained on any tolerable terms for the nation.

The general verdict of the rambler through these galleries,—our notes on which must here cease,—will certainly be that the whole exhibition is highly attractive, instructive, and successful. All success is, no doubt, more or less imperfect. There is nothing in the rooms from Woburn, Wilton, Petworth, or Belvoir, in all of which—to say nothing of more humble but still ancient establishments—treasures of portraiture exist. Nevertheless a great deal has been accumulated, and disposed and illustrated in such a way as to be very useful and agreeable. Let us hope that the exhibition of next year may be even better; and let us all do our best in our different spheres to make it so; not forgetting to be grateful to the Earl of Derby for a suggestion which has borne such good and pleasant fruit.

which  
The  
in the  
ers the  
p. 962)  
Kit-Cat  
having  
Tonson  
ak the  
n with  
rait, to  
e series  
terms

,—our  
exhibi-  
is, no  
from  
nothing  
raiture  
ed and  
is hope  
do our  
grateful  
od and